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Blade Runner: At Last, The Final Cut
Blood Lines: Borderline Superstars?
The Unknown Portraits Of FH Varley
Community League Volunteers Delineating





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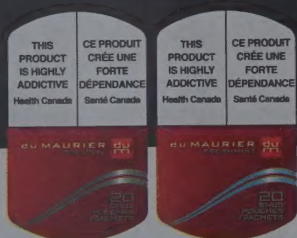


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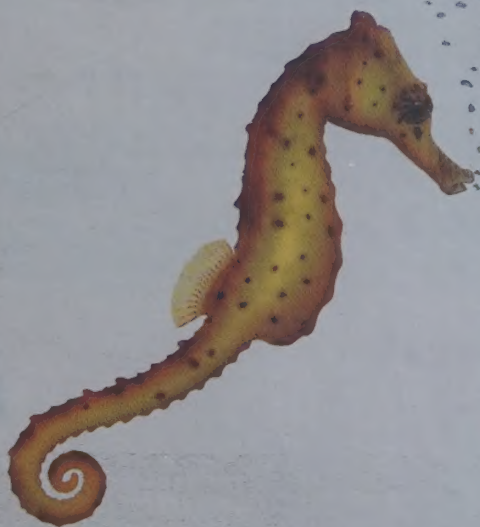
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LONDON DRUGS

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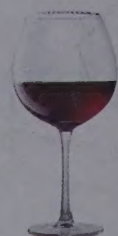


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"HEM. ER. OIDS." I PRONOUNCED THE SYLLABLES CAREFULLY. I NODDED AS THE ELDERLY ASIAN WOMAN REPEATED THEM.

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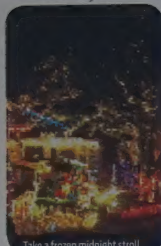
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Broken Social Scene Presents: Kevin Drew, Dec 15 at Edmonton Events Centre

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DECEMBER 17

keeping toasty | **HOT TODDY** garnish a mug with cane sugar, add 2 oz. warmed dark rum or bourbon, and toss in a cinnamon stick. Yum.

DECEMBER 18

hockey | **OILERS VS. DETROIT, AND IT'S ACTUALLY ON CBC.** Snuggle in and cheer on the boys, however futile it may seem.

DECEMBER 19

fun | **SKATING** Strap on your skates and head to the ice at City Hall. Go extra early and heckle the councillors before their first coffee of the day.

DECEMBER 20

music | **PENNYWISE** The punk stalwarts headline at the Shaw Conference Centre.

DECEMBER 21

cabaret | **CAPITOL CITY BURLESQUE XXXMAS PARTY** at New City.

DECEMBER 22

comedy | **SUSANNA PATCHOULI** and her cohorts present a seasonal salute to the solstice at the Varscona.

DECEMBER 23



Add rum or brandy to egg-nog, sprinkle with nutmeg.

DECEMBER 24

'twas the night before | **TAKE AN EVENING STROLL** DOWN CANDY CANE LANE, 148 Street between 92 Ave. & 100 Ave. Bring a donation for the Food Bank.

DECEMBER 25

christmas | **IS THERE ANYTHING MORE FESTIVE THAN SEEING A MOVIE ON JESUS' BIRTHDAY?** Especially another Allen Vs. Predator movie? We think not. Requiem opens nationwide.

DECEMBER 26

boxing day | **SLEEP, RECOVER, HIDE.** Then check out The Franklins at The Pawn Shop.

DECEMBER 27

post mortem | The crowds have died down, NOW go spend your gift card riches.



It is a wonderful life, isn't it? At Metro Cinema, Dec 16.

CALENDAR

NINE INCH NAILS' **TRENT REZNOR** ON THE GRAMMYS **“ OUT-OF-TOUCH OLD MEN JACKING EACH OTHER OFF. ENOUGH!**

see magazine's two week forecast of events in edmonton

listings: news pg 19 | city life pg 21 | new years pg 31 | music pg 30 | movies pg 38 | arts pg 45

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CITY AFFAIRS • COMMUNITY LEAGUES • BY ANGELA BRUNSCHOT (788 words)

Back to the Little Leagues?

DWINDLING VOLUNTEER LEVELS THREATEN TO DIMINISH COMMUNITY LEAGUES' INFLUENCE AT CITY HALL

The harshly lit main room at the Inglewood community hall was mostly empty when I arrived for the league's general meeting.

During the election of the new board, not one new name was put forward, and the current president and vice-presidents nonenthusiastically agreed to serve another year. By the middle of the meeting, over a dozen residents had appeared to hotly debate how to fight a neighbourhood redevelopment proposal which includes highrise apartment buildings. The participants were not the cross-community group I'd imagined. From the tenor of the debate, I could tell I was the only apartment-dweller in the room. I was also the only person under 30.

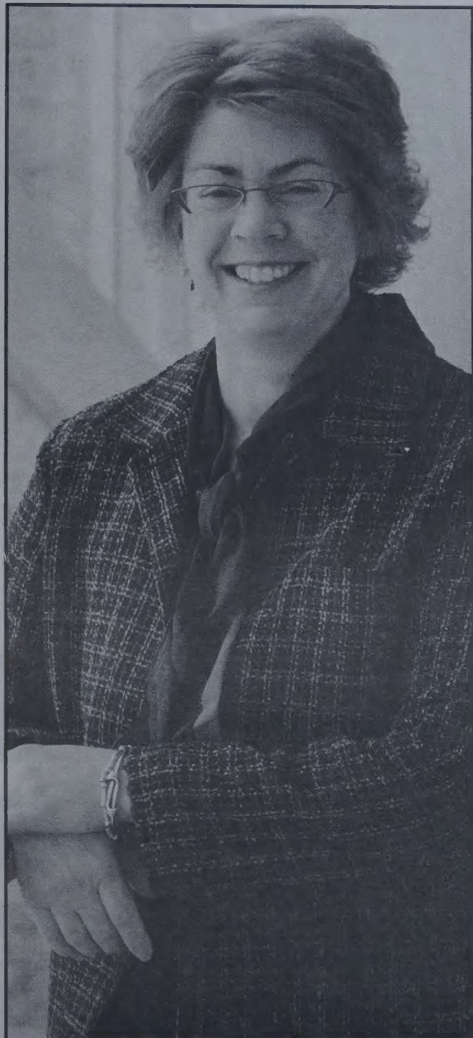
Colette Krezanowski knows the feeling. When she enters the South Clareview Community League hall in northeast Edmonton, she's the youngest person in the room.

Even though the 30-year-old mother and part-time small business owner moved from Clareview to McLeod a couple years ago, she still spends 15 to 20 hours a week volunteering for the South Clareview league. She returns to Clareview because there aren't enough volunteers to keep the league running, and she doesn't want the already-struggling neighbourhood to lose its arena and community hall.

Glenora, a more affluent neighbourhood near the downtown, faces the same volunteer problem, says president Pam Wojcicki. She's been a member of the Glenora league for 15 years and remembers a time when a much greater proportion of the neighbourhood was involved.

"We had way more volunteers," she says. "We had a New Year's Eve carnival, a winter festival, pub nights, tons of stuff. And we had different people doing each of those activities."

The problem is the same across the city, says Allan Bolstad, president of the Federation of Community Leagues and a former city councillor. Although the federation boasts 40,000 members across the city and will add a couple of new leagues in 2008, some leagues are suffering from the same shortage of volunteers that has hit organizations



NO NIMBY HERE? Pam Wojcicki, president of the Glenora community league, is still fighting the Humanities Development proposal. PHOTO BY MERYL LAWTON

across the city, a trend that's generally blamed on the labour shortage. But the boom can't be the scapegoat for everything, and at least in the Glenora league, an "outlook" problem was cited as the reason why younger people were not joining the league.

What makes the decline of community league members alarming is the role these organizations play in local government. Well beyond pro-

viding space for neighbourhood celebrations and skating rinks, Edmonton community leagues act as their neighbourhoods' mouthpieces at city hall, providing grassroots feedback on bylaws and development proposals. The system is unique in Canada and, when it works properly, can greatly increase the influence of average Edmontonians at city hall.

"There's a lot more credibility to something the league is saying than

[the complaints of] just two neighbours," says Bolstad. "I certainly thought that when I was on city council." For that reason, he says, community leagues really need to have a significant number of members from across the neighbourhood.

Leagues in older neighbourhoods are the hardest hit by the decline in volunteerism. Young families often leave the inner city for less expensive homes in newer developments, while the construction boom and the city's infill policy have also increased the number of development projects in older neighbourhoods. The result is a lot of proposals affecting everyday life in the neighbourhood, but fewer energetic young people to examine each new proposal, figuring out their impact, and voicing concerns about them at public meetings and city hall. Leagues also require a lot of volunteer time: the Glenora Community League, one of the more politically active leagues in the city, has been fighting a Humanities Development proposal for 142 Street and Stony Plain Road for three years. The committee working on the development proposal has roughly eight people working at least 15 hours a week.

The fight against high-density developments could be one factor in the lack of volunteers. Pam Wojcicki has tried to recruit younger people by approaching the members of the preschool co-operative that's affiliated with the community league. "We didn't get a lot of response," she says, "and the response that we did get was, as you put it, 'an outlook problem.' It's so far from the truth and it bothers me."

She's aware that community leagues have a reputation for espousing a selfish "Not In My Backyard" mentality, but she argues that the traffic problems created by high-density projects like the one at 142nd and Stony Plain affect the whole city. It's easy to make community leagues a target, she says, but she thinks they are standing up for what they see as the best interests of the community. She says community leagues are not against apartments and understand how unsustainable single-family houses are. But that doesn't mean developers should be given free rein. "It's not a case of 'I don't want it in my backyard,'" she says. "It's a case of 'Is it the right decision for the city?'"

NEWS BRIEFS • ANGELA BRUNSCHOT

PROVINCIAL ELECTION • EDMONTON-RUTHERFORD BUTLER PREPARES FOR BATTLE

Michael Butler was acclaimed as the provincial NDP candidate in Edmonton-Rutherford on Wednesday, December 5.

Butler says he's entering provincial politics in order to build support networks for families dealing with violence. He's pushing for an increase in the number of social service workers. His wife, Stephanie Rae-Butler, was killed in April, and his younger brother Kenneth Butler is under arrest for the crime.

The 26-year-old owns a small insulation installation business. He has no previous political experience, but he doesn't see that as a liability. "I don't want to make myself a politician," he says. "It's just about real-life issues."

He'll be running against Liberal MLA Rick Miller. In 2004, the finance critic won the riding by about 3,000 votes, unseating Tory MLA Ian McClelland. In that election, NDP candidate George Slade came in third, roughly 3,000 votes behind McClelland. In 2001, McClelland beat Rick Miller by 600 votes. In the 1997 and 1993 elections, the Tories won the southwestern riding.

TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKERS • PROVINCIAL INSPECTORS \$1 MILLION FOR TFW OVERSIGHT

Two advisory offices for Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs) were announced on Monday, December 10. The offices include inspectors who will visit worksites, interview workers and employers, and examine payrolls. The office and inspectors will cost \$1 million annually.

"Because they are becoming a bigger part of the picture, we know that there are certain things that we need to do to ensure they are treated fairly," says Bart Johnson, a provincial spokesperson for Employment, Immigration and Industry.

However, workers facing housing problems or illegal recruitment fees must still go through the federal Customs and Immigration department, as the TFW program is not administered by the province.

Last week the Alberta Federation of Labour TFW advocate Yessy Byl released a six-month report calling the TFW program an "unqualified disaster." The report did recommend increased government oversight of the TFW program, but it also called for rent ceilings, minimum housing standards, and that the province allow workers to apply for citizenship without the support of their employers.

This year, 2,500 foreign workers were sponsored for immigration by their employers, and the provincial government aims to increase that figure.

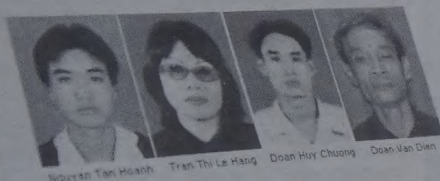
“You have to believe in the tooth fairy to believe that P3 financing is going to save you money.”

—Kevin Taft, leader of the provincial Liberal Party on the public-private partnerships created to build schools in Edmonton and Calgary

...through the Internet,” and that “under the guise of members of the public lodge petitions” he and his accomplices demonstrated and posted “distorted” articles on the Internet. He is accused of being a member of Bloc 8406, an Internet-based democracy movement calling for peaceful political change and respect for rights.

On May 2007, judicial authorities sentenced Tran Quoc Hien to five years in prison plus two years’ probation. Amnesty International does not know where he is being held.

Some think that the other four UWFO leaders—Nguyen Tan Hoi, Tran Thi Le Hang, Doan Huy Chuong, and his father Doan Van Dien—are held at B5 prison camp in Dong Nai province. Amnesty International does not know when they might be tried or on what charges.



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human rights

WITNESS

DECEMBER 9, 2007 | 2:46:47 PM | STEEPS CAFÉ, Whyte Avenue | PHOTO BY JOHN ULAN

Supporters of Amnesty International Edmonton take part in a letter writing event, as part of a Global event for Human Rights Day, called Write for Rights,

OUR COMMENT ON THIS WEEK'S NEWS

EDMONTON • RENTALS ELECTRICITY BILLS

Rental accommodation behemoth Boardwalk has announced a plan to change its tenants for electricity. Green to the nth degree, Boardwalk is introducing the measure landlord to help decrease energy use, not to offload costs onto tenants like some kind of user-fee-loving provincial premier of days gone by.

The generous Boardwalk will buffer the hit on tenant pocket books by decreasing their regular rent increase.

The more negative of you will focus on the “rent increase” part of that, instead of on the “smaller” part.

Of course, tenants have no idea how much their rent increase would have been in the first place, but Boardwalk is certainly in no position to say. Increases, as you know, are always determined by mysterious “market forces,” not by landlords.

CANADA • SECURITY LEGISLATION SECRET TRIALS

Where is that federal opposition when you need it? You know, those people who are always saying how scary Stephen Harper is? The Liberals are voting for security certificate legislation that would permit the Canadian government to detention of new immigrants without laying charges or conducting public trials. When the Supreme Court of Canada declared the bill unconstitutional, it was a perfect opening for the official opposition to get rid of the racist legislation, but instead the Grits support it with a few minor tweaks. The bill’s passing was delayed after the NDP called for the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security to hear from Adil Charkaoui, a Moroccan permanent-resident who was detained for almost three years under the legislation and remains under house arrest. The NDP and the Bloc will vote against security certificates, but the bill is expected to pass once again, before Parliament breaks for the holiday.

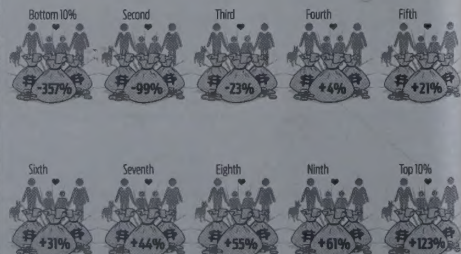
UNITED STATES • CELEBRITY JAIL TIME CONRAD BLACK

The notorious Lord Black of Crossharbour was sentenced to six and a half years in jail on Monday, admittedly satisfying news that received blanket media coverage. The *National Post*, Conrad Black’s former flagship Canadian conservative newspaper, proclaimed the sentence a win. Considering that he could have faced 91 years if convicted on all counts, that’s not just saving face. Black plans an appeal.

While Black’s trial certainly deserved ample coverage, the shape that coverage took was frequently disappointing. On the CBC, a report on the trail included the fact that Elton John had written the court a letter testifying to Black’s character. Another talked about how Black, even as a criminal, would be welcomed with open arms back into British society. Who cares? Let’s get the gritty details about the \$6.1 million he stole.

BY THE NUMBERS

CHANGES IN MEDIAN NET WORTH OF CANADIAN FAMILIES FROM 1984-2005 (IN 2005 DOLLARS) | SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA



COMMENTARY: ECO-COWBOY WATCH | 154 words

Media Keeps Its Hands Off Harper



OPINION LINDA MCQUAIG
P.M. MISREPRESENTS
CANADIANS' VIEWS ON
CLIMATE CHANGE, BUT FEW
WILL CALL HIM ON IT

Only a few years ago, Stephen Harper was a climate change denier whose opposition to Kyoto made him too extreme for most Canadians.

Harper is still opposing Kyoto. But now, as Canada's prime minister, he's able to do something about it. Indeed, he's playing a pivotal role in thwarting worldwide efforts to deal with climate change.

ing a follow-up deal on Kyoto.

Harper gets away with being badly out of sync with Canadian public opinion on this crucial issue largely because of the kid-gloves treatment he gets from the Canadian media. Commentators relentlessly flail Liberal leader Stéphane Dion for his awkwardness and ineffectiveness, while saying little negative about Harper. There was little critical media response, for instance, to Harper's remarks at the close of the Commonwealth summit: "For the first time in a very long time, Canada's voice is being heard and the consequences of our voice being heard is we're getting the changes we want to see."

"We?"

Canadians, like all reasonable people around the world, recognize that urgent action is needed on climate change, particularly in light of

their part in the fight against climate change. But they didn't cause the buildup of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. We in the West did—by burning fossil fuels that have allowed us to enjoy the comforts of the modern world. But we can cut back our consumption of fossil fuels dramatically and still maintain comfortable lifestyles. If we instituted similar cutbacks in India—where the average person consumes one-tenth the fossil fuels a Canadian does—we'd condemn them to unending poverty.

That's why Kyoto—like the Montreal Protocol, which has made progress in reversing the Earth's ozone depletion—is based on what John Bennett of ClimateforChange.ca calls "differentiated responsibilities." The West bears a bigger burden, reflecting its bigger responsibility in causing the problem.

Those wanting to block Kyoto

WE CAN CUT BACK OUR CONSUMPTION OF FOSSIL FUELS AND STILL MAINTAIN COMFORTABLE LIFESTYLES. IF WE INSTITUTED SIMILAR CUTBACKS IN INDIA, WE'D CONDEMN THEM TO UNENDING POVERTY.

Odd things happen in politics, but this is surely one of the oddest in recent years. Even as polls show Canadians have become more convinced of the need to take decisive action on climate change, our prime minister has taken an aggressive role on the world stage against such action.

Last weekend, Harper seems to have single-handedly undermined efforts by Commonwealth leaders meeting in Uganda to come up with a communiqué calling for strong action on global warming—a position that would have given momentum to upcoming UN talks aimed at produc-

devastating UN report earlier this month. To suggest that we should celebrate our voice being heard—when that voice is blocking progress on something clearly vital to the public interest—is absurd.

Harper veers from the absurd to the malicious when he tries to blame Third World countries for preventing progress on climate change—a strategy successfully used by Republicans and the oil industry in the late 1990s to get the U.S. Senate to reject Kyoto.

Of course, India, China, and other developing countries will have to do

typically try to stir up resentment in the West by suggesting the Third World is getting off easy. There goes the Third World getting a sweetheart deal again.

With the defeat of Australia's John Howard, U.S. President George W. Bush is increasingly isolated in his campaign to block the world from taking meaningful action on climate change. Our prime minister is playing a key role in helping him out.

But here in Canada, our commentators know that the big story is Stéphane Dion's lackluster performance.

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Rude and Miscontrued

POINTS TO PONDER EXILE

TWO THINGS THAT NEED TO BE SAVED FOR THE RIGHT MOMENT: CANDID SNAPS AND OUTRAGE

I really love looking at exposed flesh, so it pains me to say there's somewhere it doesn't belong. But James Moore, the B.C. Conservative MP who successfully made like a martyr last week, needs a bit of a lesson on appropriate behaviour, and I'm just the perversity to give it to him.

has emerged from the incident as something of a hero, which is different from being stuck with the label of consummate pig and banner-carrier for the systemic oppression of women. In other words, if there was any intent to render him a pariah, it backfired.

Let's be clear about this: what Mathysen saw was not pornography. She would have made a better case had she stuck to describing what she saw and left out the sensational interpretation. It would have been per-

keep the goods well-observed. It has nothing to do with pornography and everything to do with respecting your colleagues.

And despite his protestations, this is something Moore failed to do. Moore is known as among the most civilized and respectful Tory MPs (not a big achievement if one grades on a curve). But even paragons can slip, and he did. Keep the lingerie and swimwear photos at home, James. No one at work needs to see them, unless you're the kind who gets off on showing off to other people, in which case you need to obtain their consent first.

Of course, the Tories who are so smug on this issue right now are just as good at condemning the baring of flesh when it suits their own agenda. When Liberal MP Scott Brison posed nude for a calendar in support of cancer research, conservative reaction ranged from dismissive to hostile, even though access to the photo was quite limited. And you can bet that if a gay male MP in the Commons had an image on his computer of his boyfriend in a Speedo, there would be hell to pay.

I'm hoping (no doubt in vain) that one good thing that may come out of this episode: that similar eruptions of inappropriate behaviour will be

dealt with in a mature way, with a sense of proportion.

There was an incident a decade ago in the B.C. Legislature, often cited as the most raucous in the country, where then-NDP cabinet minister Joy MacPhail unleashed a jumping wind-up dick on a male colleague's desk during a televised debate. This was her comment (and that of some women co-conspirators from both parties) on the chest-thumping political style of men in the House.

It came as no surprise to anyone familiar with MacPhail's infamously filthy sense of humour, but several conservative male commentators seized upon it as an assault on men and a devaluation of their contribution to public life.

Although the prank was far more calculated than what Moore did, I still believe it fits within the definition of "tasteless and inappropriate," rather than the realm of sociopathy

or invidious social commentary. The women MLAs' behaviour was crude, inappropriate, and stupid, but that's the worst that could be said about it.

Which brings us back to Irene Mathysen's approach to Moore's photos. Conflating what is tasteless with what is odious and unconscionable is not only a mistake; it's also degrading to everyone concerned. It's one thing to say, "Your picture bothered me," and quite another to add, "And by the way, it's also a knife in the heart of every woman ever injured or killed by a man."

By resorting to histrionics, Mathysen robbed Parliament of the chance to deal with the real issue, which Moore was on the wrong side of. And in doing so, she let down not just women who have genuinely suffered—but also the cause of intelligent, respectful debate in this country.

inexileeverywhere@gmail.com

IT'S ONE THING TO SAY, "YOUR PICTURE BOTHERED ME," AND QUITE ANOTHER TO ADD, "AND BY THE WAY, IT'S ALSO A KNIFE IN THE HEART OF EVERY WOMAN EVER KILLED BY A MAN."

Poor lad. An image of Moore's bikini-clad girlfriend on his laptop caused London NDP MP Irene Mathysen to accuse him of viewing soft porn within the House of Commons. She went on to attach his crime to the Tories' foul legislation and funding record on women's issues and, more seriously (and insanely), last week's anniversary of the 1989 mass murder of women at Montreal's École Polytechnique.

Mathysen was rightly compelled by her party to apologize in the House for her remarks, and Moore

fectly legitimate for her to say that she was uncomfortable with another MP in the House looking at pictures of a woman in a bikini, regardless of the subject's identity and relation to the MP in question.

This same principle applies in most workplaces—the office is a neutral space. You can have pictures of your honey on your desk, but it's tasteless to display photos of them in a state of undress. Even if you've been married for 20 years and your relationship is the model that all adult relationships should emulate,



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Hey, Tammy Faye:

I know the bus rides are a little longer than usual, but please do your grooming at home. I do not need to trudge out to the frigid bus stop, get splashed with muck by asshole truck drivers, and then finally sit down to witness you performing a full-scale bridal make-up application for the duration of the bumpy ride. I hope you jab yourself in the eye with those eyelash curlers next time.

Yick

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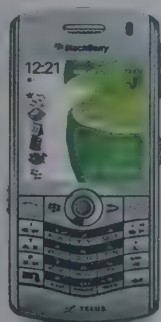
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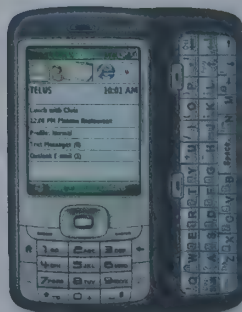


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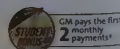
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ACTIVIST AGENCY An online newsletter resource for activism related events in Edmonton, with up-to-date information on sustainable practices, networking, and active organizations in the city. Supported and maintained by Earth's General Store (10032-42 Ave. upstairs, 439-8725). Go to www.esa.ca, info also available in-store.

BIKE WORKS Fix your bike. Edmonton Bicycle Commuters' Bike Works is entirely run by volunteers. Hours vary by season, call ahead: 439-2453. Info: www.edmontonbikes.ca.

COUNCIL OF CANADIANS 3RD WED EVERY MONTH Independent public interest organization promoting economic justice, democracy, and asserting Canadian sovereignty. Info: 429-4500.

EDMONTON SMALL PRESS ASSOCIATION 3RD WED EVERY MONTH, 7 PM. An activist arts organization, seeking socially conscious artists and production volunteers. Info: 434-1125 or contact@edmontonsmallpress.org.

FRIENDS OF LUBICON ALBERTA THU 4 PM. APIRG OFFICE, HUB MALL, U OF A CAMPUS Grassroots solidarity organization demanding fair and just settlement for the Lubicon Cree of Northern Alberta. Info: www.lubicon.org.

GETTING ACTIVE FOR 9/11 TRUTH Info: www.edmonton911truth.com.

INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD 2ND THU EVERY MONTH, 7 PM. RM 2-42, HUMANITIES BUILDING, U OF A CAMPUS. Meetings open to the public. Info: edmonton.iww.ca.

MARGARET SAVAN FOUNDATION 3RD & 4TH SAT EVERY MONTH, 9 AM-5 PM. FACULTY, SAINT-JEAN, 8406-91 ST., RM 3-B. Organization for the emancipation and autonomy of African women, providing programs on economy, community health, training in HIV-AIDS prevention. Instruction in French, English, and African languages. Admission free for members, membership \$10. Info: 490-7332.

PEACE AMBASSADORS INITIATIVE MON, 5-7 PM. EDUCATION NORTH 4-104, U OF A CAMPUS A youth group promoting anti-racist and diversity workshops. Info: 425-4544 or www.iabn.org.

SIEIRA CLUB OF CANADA Prairie Chapter works with regionally and socially conscious individuals to build strong grassroots movement in the Prairies. Info: www.sieiraclub.ca/prairie.

SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVIE NIGHT 4TH FRI EVERY MONTH. UNITARIAN CHURCH OF EDMONTON, 10804-119 ST. Screenings resume JAN 25. Co-sponsored by the Unitary Church of Edmonton Social Justice Committee, CESC, and Not Just Tourists. \$5 donations or PWY at the door. Info: njl.edmonton@gmail.com.

THIRDSAIL TUESDAY DOCUMENTARY SERIES TUE, 7 PM. STEEP'S TEA LOUNGE, 1076-82 AVE. DEC 18 "China Blue", teenage workers struggle under the harsh conditions of a denim factory in southern China. Screenings free. Info: 988-8105 or michael@steeps.com.

UNESCO COALITION FOR PEACE LAST FR EVERY MONTH, 3 PM. BOYLE MCCAULEY HEALTH CENTRE, 2ND FL. BOARD-ROOM, 10628-96 ST. Info: Greenpeace Canada, 922-5566.

WOMEN IN BLACK 1ST & 3RD SAT EVERY MONTH, 10-11 AM. STRATHCONA FARMERS' MARKET, 83 AVE. & 103 ST. International women's peace and anti-racism group formed by Jewish and Arab women, opposing violence in all forms. All women, men, and children invited to attend the bi-weekly silent vigil. Info: 435-7051.

YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE 2ND FRI EVERY MONTH, 5 PM. REMEDY CAFÉ, 8631-109 ST. For discussion topics and suggested readings go to www.facebook.com/group. Info: 359-2750.

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POETRY OPEN STAGE THU, 8 PM. NAKED CYBER CAFÉ & ESPRESSO BAR, 10354 JASPER AVE., 425-9730. Open stage poetry readings and performances. All welcome.

POETS HAVEN READING SERIES MON, 7 PM. UPPER CRUST CAFÉ, 10409-86 AVE. DEC 17, local talents Den Murray, Michelle Prater, Tricia Eckle, Julie Robinson, Barbara Mitchell, and Lisa Gansher present readings. Presented by the Strail of Poets Society. \$5 at the door. Info: 422-8276 or www.strollpoets.org.

POETS INN THU, 7-9 PM. ST. THOMAS CAFÉ, ST. ALBERT. Weekly writing evenings. Info: www.poetsinn.org.

STORY SLAM 3RD WED EVERY MONTH, 8 PM. BLUE CHAIR CAFÉ, 9624-76 AVE. Sign-up 7 pm. First ten writers only, allotted five minutes each. Info: thebookproject@hotmail.com.




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HOLIDAY FUN • BOOZE GIFTING • BY MELISSA PRIESTLEY | 987 words

You Look Like a Tempranillo to Me

THE PERFECT WINES FOR ALL THE QUIRKS ON YOUR CHRISTMAS LIST

Christmas is coming. No shit, right? If you're like me, you haven't bought a single gift yet. In fact, you have purposely avoided thinking about it, because you've been through enough holidays to know that ultimately, all that stress and effort just isn't worth it. Instead, you have the wisdom to pick a single, simple Christmas modus operandi and run with it. Your plan this year: everyone gets booze. To simplify things even more, everyone gets wine, a gift that's both classy and tasteful, provided you choose it correctly.

And this year, things will be different. No more playing vino roulette and buying your friend/family member a bottle that (a) has a free mini-Toblerone around the neck (which somehow never makes it to the gift bag); (b) was selected by their mom, who was sure they liked "that one in the green bottle with the gold writing"; or (c) was recommended by a pimply-faced liquor clerk who had to check with his manager to make sure the store carried Shiraz, and then proceeded to ask if Shiraz was a country somewhere in Africa—you know, like, near Iraq?

No, this year you'll revolutionize your approach to buying Christmas wine, and everyone will get a wine based on their personality type.



THE IN-LAWS

We'll start with the hardest people to buy for. Now, for those cool and adventurous-in-laws who love you more than

their own child (sorry honey), pick something interesting and lesser-known, like a South African Pinotage or a Spanish Albariño. If they never liked you in the first place but you're still trying to get in their good books, go for something with general prestige, like a Champagne or an ageworthy Bordeaux from a good year, like 2000, 2001, or 2005. Even though they will undoubtedly turn up their nose, their snobby friends will show interest in your choice, winning you (unacknowledged, but still valuable) brownie points.



THE FAMILY LUSH

On the opposite end of the spectrum, buying for Leroy, your tinsel-draped, pissed-by-4 p.m.

uncle, who's sure to be staggering around the living room singing unintelligible, vaguely carol-like tunes like some unholy Christmas zombie. Is a snap. Just buy something high in alcohol. Aim for Australian Shiraz, Napa Valley Zinfandel, or even a fortified wine, like Tawny Port. Of Leroy will be bellowing "Hark the Harold Snowman Sings!" while you get to finish off the bottle.



THE HIPPIE

For your granola friend, opt for an organic/bio-dynamic wine. Contrary to popular belief, there are some good organic

wines out there. Both Chapoutier in France and Stratus in Canada consistently produce good-quality wines. Just keep in mind that not all organic wines are 100 per cent organic: some are made with organic grapes, but the production processes may not be fully organic. Most people are okay with this, but if you're shopping for a hardcore vegan then your range of choices is a little more limited. The Organic Wine Works à Notre Terre, which goes for around \$20, is one of the few organic and vegan wines available in Alberta.



THE (TOO) HAUTE GUY

We all have a metrosexual on our list, whether they admit it or not.

Buy them a rosé. Pink is the new black, people, and we're not talking White Zinfandel, either—many rosés are neither cheap nor sweet (though if you're buying for someone cheap and sweet, go for the White Zin). Plus, there's a good chance the wine will either perfectly match or horrendously clash with their outfit, and since they can probably make both work, you can't lose.



THE NON-DRINKER

For your quiet mom or aunt who never drinks (except at Christmas,

when she's replaced by a giggling, hiccupping alien), pick something sweet and fruity that goes down like candy. Try a German Riesling Auslese or a dessert wine, such as an ice wine or an Australian Late Harvest Muscat. Just steer clear of Le Plat d'Or, Blue Nun, or Black Tower. Trust me; she's had years of fun with those bad boys.



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Your beret-wearing, I Officially Hate Christmas But Love the Parties pal will love any wine that comes from a country with leftist politics, especially one that has recovered from a repressive dictatorship. This makes pretty much all South American wine acceptable, and hundreds of wines from Chile, Argentina, and even the occasional one from Uruguay are easily found. They can get drunk while their mass-marketed Che hoodie/hat/button looks on with pride.

WE ALL HAVE A METROSEXUAL ON OUR LIST, WHETHER THEY ADMIT IT OR NOT. BUY THEM A ROSÉ.

PINK IS THE NEW BLACK, PEOPLE, AND WE'RE NOT TALKING WHITE ZINFANDEL, EITHER.

THE REST OF YOUR LIST

To wrap things up (forgive the terrible holiday pun), here are a few recommendations for the rest of the people on your list who don't fit into the previous categories:

- Sparkling wine is generally well-received, especially during the holidays. Give them something different from the standard Champagne, like an Italian Prosecco or an Australian Sparkling Shiraz.

- New World reds are usually crowd-pleasers, and people tend to find them generally more accessible than those from the Old World. Plus, they often come packaged with funky labels and cool names. Argentinean Malbec, American Cabernet Sauvignon, and Chilean Pinot Noir are all relatively fail-safe.

- That said, some Old World wines are also easily approachable, and they have foreign hard-to-pronounce names, so everyone can feel more sophisticated. Go for Spanish Tempranillo, Portuguese Touriga Nacional, or Italian Primitivo.

- Even though it's kitschy, you could always go for a wine that has its name somewhere on the label, or a wine from their birth year. Although, if you're buying for a 77-year-old I don't recommend buying something from 1930. Alternately, you could give a recently-married couple a wine from their anniversary year.

And remember, if you just can't find the right wine, there's no shame in giving them a gift certificate.



Melissa Priestley is a Wine Consultant at deVine Wines & Spirits

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Yonathan Sumamo | Journalism Student, Grant MacEwan
By FAWNDA MITHRUSH

Where: Dodging holiday madness downtown.
Hair: It's more lack of getting my hair done. I do it myself. I just like it big and out there.
Wearing: My Burberry polo is from Holt's, the jacket is from the Guess? outlet store in South Edmonton Common. The D&G glasses are from Lenscrafters in Southgate, the jeans

are from Buffalo. The shoes I got somewhere on Whyte—Dvine, I think.
Into: I'm into music, reggae and rap mostly. I like comic books. I don't want to paint myself as a nerd, but I like *Green Lantern* and stuff like that.
Icons: Kanye West and Common.

HOW TO BUY LONG UNDERWEAR

Okay, it's now officially cold enough to freeze the balls off a brass monkey. But take that tea-cosy out of your pants, help ■ at hand. Follow SEE's guide to buying the best long underwear, and laugh scornfully ■ those idiots still trying to be "sexy" this winter.

High-Tech Textiles

Most brands today use some variation on polyester—often polypropylene—for its softness and moisture-wicking abilities. David Pechter, outdoor specialist at the Running Room, recommends anything with DuPont's "Thermastat" fabric for ultimate warmth and dryness, or something from Polartec's range made with silver particles to neutralize odours. For those not into synthetics, long underwear can also be found in silk, which is incredibly soft and good ■ moisture-wicking, but doesn't perform so well in Edmonton's arctic temperatures. According to Pechter, the most recent trend is towards merino wool, which is crazy warm and won't stink.

Snug as a Bug

Naturally if your base layer is too tight, you're not going to benefit from it. But don't be tempted to go a little bigger than your normal size, as bulky underwear just won't be comfortable, especially when layered under your everyday attire. Make sure you try it on before buying, as it is considered underwear and you usually won't be able to return it. Also, it's a good idea to get something with flatlock seams, which won't itch or rub against your dried-up and irritated winter skin.

The Cost of Warm

For anyone not intending to spend a lot of time in Edmonton, get to a department store that carries thermal sets.



for many winters to come—and you'd like to leave the house ■ any point—head to an outdoor outfitter ■ sporting-goods store and invest in something backed by all the snazzy science stuff mentioned above. Bottom start at \$30, with good tops going for \$40 and up.

Now Shop!

An outdoor outfitter shop where the sales staff are experienced and knowledgeable should be your first port of call. Stores tried and tested by SEE include The Running Room (see Edmonton stores, see www.runningroom.com for addresses) and Mountain Equipment Co-op (12328-102 Ave.). Quite a few places will have a sale on thermal under-

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THE FAMILY LUSH

On the opposite end of the spectrum, buying for Leroy, your trisect-draped, pissed-by-4 p.m.

uncle, who's sure to be staggering around the living room singing unintelligible, vaguely carol-like tunes like some unholy Christmas zombie, is a snap. Just buy something high in alcohol. Aim for Australian Shiraz, Napa Valley Zinfandel, or even a fortified wine, like Tawny Port. Of Leroy will be following "Hark the Harold Snowman Sings" while you get to finish off the bottle.



THE HIPPIE

For your granola friend, opt for an organic/bio-dynamic wine. Contrary to popular belief, there are some good organic wines out there. Both Chapoutier in France and Stratus in Canada consistently produce good-quality wines. Just keep in mind that not all organic wines are 100 per cent organic; some are made with organic grapes, but the production processes may not be organic. Most people are okay with that. If you're shopping for a hardcore organic, your range of choices is a little smaller. The Organic Wine Works in Napa goes for around \$20. Is one of the best and vegan wines available.

DO YOU EVER WORRY THAT HANUKKAH WILL BECOME OVERCOMMERCIALIZED, LIKE CHRISTMAS?

In Canada, especially in Edmonton, it's not such a problem—because we are such a small community, the big retailers don't worry so much about it. In the States, it already has become pretty commercialized, unfortunately. Not quite as bad as Christmas, but moving in that direction.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE PART OF HANUKKAH?

a big sweet together with family is important. Try a Late Harvest wine, such as Late Harvest Pinot d'Or, she's had.

And the candles are nice too.

WHAT PART OF HANUKKAH WOULD YOU LIKE THE NON-JEWISH COMMUNITY TO TAKE ON?

The main message of Hanukkah is the idea that even if you live in a majority culture, which is very attractive and pervasive, it's still important to keep your own values and traditions. I think that's especially important in our multi-ethnic society here in Edmonton. Hanukkah provides a great opportunity for us to learn about other cultures.

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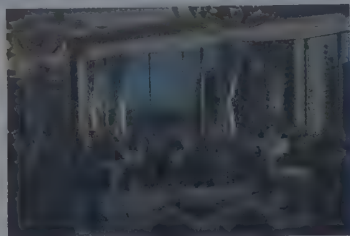
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RESTAURANTS • **INDULGING** • BY SCOTT LINGLEY | 133 words

My Christmas Gift to Me



It Just Wouldn't Fit In My Stocking! The sumptuous surroundings of Murrieta's are like the beautiful wrapping on a perfect present. PHOTO BY JASON SCOTT

I GAVE MYSELF A LAVISH MEAL AT MURRIETA'S—HOW INCREDIBLY GENEROUS OF ME!

MURRIETA'S BAR & GRILL
10612-82 Ave., 438-4100

You know who deserves a somewhat extravagant meal this holiday season? You do.

Right now you might be preoccupied with all the gifts you still need to buy (and how you're going to pay for them). But to me it seems almost criminal that you would neglect yourself in all this festive hubbub when you've doubtless earned a little self-indulgence, a little pampering, a little treat just for you.

Whether it's true or not, this was the line of reasoning my co-diner and I followed to Murrieta's Bar & Grill, a not-unposh restaurant next to O'Byrne's on Whyte Ave. Despite our tight budgets and the lack of progress we'd made procuring gifts for others, we decided to treat ourselves to a decidedly gourmet repast in a gracious, elegant setting. True, we had no reservation, so we'd have to sit in the lounge and we had declined to droll up for the occasion, but these were no impediment to our

pursuit of gastronomic pleasure.

Even from the lounge, Murrieta's looked festive and welcoming, enveloped in soft lighting and dark wood, with a baby grand piano at the centre of the room and a regiment of natively dressed servers busily engaged in seeing to the patrons' comfort. (The lounge also afforded us a view of the Toronto-Boston game on CBC.)

Soon we had our own attentive server tableside, describing the specials, suggesting wines, and enduring our attempts at humour as we perused the impressive menu. Murrieta's presents a wide array of food categories to choose from, with flatbread pizzas and pastas comprising the lower end of the price scale. Determined to be self-indulgent, we selected from the main courses centred on meat. My co-diner chose the rare-grilled Ahi tuna (\$29.98), while I opted for the pan-seared duck breast (\$27.69). To start, she ordered a spinach salad (\$9.71) while I settled on the "Courtyard" salad (\$7.03). The server consulted with a colleague before recommending a Pinot noir as being a suitably light-bodied yet robust accompaniment to both entrees. Two glasses of the Cooktoothama from Australia (\$7.64 each), rather than the more expensive Pinot noirs, were our sole nod to restraint. Our server noted that it was a screw-top, so we could take the remnants of a whole bottle home with us, but we stood pat on a smaller portion.

The salads were much larger than we were expecting; mine, a generous heap of mixed greens and sliced radishes, strewn with spiced almonds and radish sprouts and tossed in a light peach-basil vinaigrette, which really let the tongue-tingling properties of the radish and the earthy tang of the greens come through. Hers was a similarly generous portion of spinach tossed with wasabi peas and

water chestnuts, topped with strips of roasted red pepper and dressed in a miso-butter-milk emulsion. She was most pleased by the interplay of sweet and spicy, supple and crunchy, creamy and sharp on her palate. The subtle complexity of the salads was a harbinger of things to come.

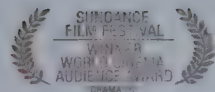
The pan-seared duck breast, divided in succulent medium-rare slices, was draped over a bed of wild rice pilaf with pecans and adorned with a vivid sash of Maple Syrah BBQ Sauce. Some carrots, zucchini, cauliflower, and green beans lurked nearby. Each tender morsel, expertly bejeweled with a few crystals of sea salt, was a gustatory ode to the joys of carnivory. The rice, flecked with brown grains and deeply imbued with butter and garlic, and the tender-crisp vegetables, as with the same butter, complemented the bird perfectly, as did the dollop of sweet, fruity sauce.

My co-diner was as rapt in the rapid pleasures of her entrée as I. The tuna, succinently grilled, retained a delicate rare interior and was lavished with wild mushroom, citrus tomato bruschetta. She received the same perfectly turned vegetables, but her tuna occupied a divan of fluffy, buttery mashed potatoes. We didn't so much eat as bask in the pleasure of our meals, which were rich and satisfying enough to preclude any thought of dessert. I'm no expert in matters oenological, but I thought the wine was a pretty good part of the meal too.

When you're indulging yourself, particularly when you know you're going to have to atone for it later, you want every detail to be just right. It will probably be a while before I plump for such extravagance again, but when I do, Murrieta's will definitely make the shortlist of reliable venues for catering to my grand appetites.

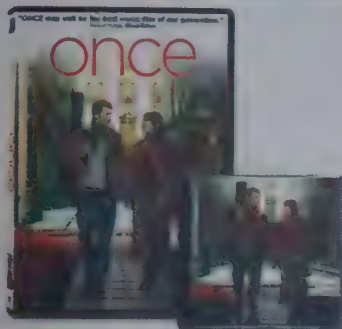
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CASUAL ELEGANT

BACON (5509 12 AVE.) This great little bohemian-chic restaurant offers a limited choice of familiar (ish) items done with some innovative twists. By pairing locally produced items with some deft hands in the kitchen, their manage to pull-off simple organic dishes that are worth remembering. ★★☆☆ (Aug 2007)

FRENCH

LA TABLE DE RENOU (1046-101A AVE.) I can't think of a better way to spend your lunch hour or a warm summer evening than sitting out on La Table de Renou's patio enjoying one their traditionally prepared Provencal classics. A nice touch of café culture here in downtown Edmonton never hurt anyone. ★★☆☆ (July 2006)

BURGERS

MOTORAUENT (7246-56 ST.) Although the food is relatively good, the real reason for visiting Motorauent is to see the physical structure of the place. To say it's unique hardly does it justice. Overall, it's a fun place to go and experience with some friends. Unless you've been before, you've likely never had an experience like Motorauent. ★★☆☆ (Nov 2006)

ITALIAN

SANTOS PIZZA AND STEAK (10821-95 ST.) Excellent place for a lunchtime sandwich in the heart of Edmonton's little Italy. It's not all fancy schmancy and uplight or anything, but then again it isn't all fancy schmancy and uplight. They offer good standard Italian fare, prepared well, at reasonable prices. What's not to like? ★★☆☆ (Sept 2006)

MIDDLE EASTERN

KAMIL'S TURKISH CAFE AND RESTAURANT (2408-118 AVE.) If you're the type that can relax and just go with the flow and not like too off-put by Kamil's location and informal nature, you might have a new favourite little spot for some down-home Turkish food. ★★☆☆ (Aug 2006)

PIZZA

FAMOSO NEAPOLITAN PIZZERIA (11750 JASPER AVE.) If you're interested in good food in fast-food like atmosphere, or are looking for franchise opportunities, look no further than Famoso. They serve authentic Neapolitan pizzas, as per the regulations set out by the Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana (VPN), in a quick in and out fashion. ★★☆☆ (July 2007)

TONY'S PIZZA PALACE (9605-117 AVE.) Without a doubt, Tony's is one of the top places in Edmonton for a traditional Italian pizza. Watching the guys in the kitchen hand toss the dough and batter back and forth can be just about as good as the food. ★★☆☆ (May 2006)

DALLAS PIZZA & STEAKHOUSE (7834-105 AVE.) Dallas is really your prototypical pizza and steakhouse type restaurant from a bygone era. But, given that the food is well-prepared, the service is good, and the price is reasonable, it makes me wonder why we've moved on! Give the Dallas a try and you'll find yourself asking the same thing. ★★☆☆ (Aug 2006)

SOUTHEAST ASIAN

BAN THAI (15726-100 AVE.) Fairly authentic tasting Thai food in... how would I describe the surroundings... maybe fairly authentic as well? At any rate, the dishes are what I imagine really good home cooked food is like in Thailand. A bit pricey though. ★★☆☆ (July 2006)

NINH KIEU (10706-98 ST.) If you're a fan of the venerable Vietnamese noodle soup, give the Ninh Kieu a try. Everything about the place is fairly standard and similar to what you would normally expect from this type of restaurant, except for the pho, which is really quite good. Oh, I guess the green onion cake is pretty good too. ★★☆☆ (Jan 2007)

PURPLE DIAMOND RESTAURANT (9645 101A AVE.) The Purple Diamond Restaurant offers a large variety of relatively authentic Vietnamese and Chinese dishes, depending on what you choose from the 109 item menu. The food is relatively fresh and well-prepared, and the surroundings are comfortable and clean. All in all, it's a good gamble. ★★☆☆ (July 2006)

KOSHER

CASH LEVI (EUROPA BOULEVARD, WEM) You've got to be meshuganeh if you think there's any better place for falafels in Edmonton. The next time you're at the mall and need a bite, do yourself a favour and give this kosher food center a try for an orthodox take on traditional mall fare. ★★☆☆ (May 2006)

CHINESE

NEW TAN TAN (10137-97 ST.) If you're an old dim sum veteran, you'll probably be happy enough with the New Tan Tan and its somewhat "rugged" style. But if you're new to this type of service and are looking for a dim sum for dum-dums first time experience, you might want to try someplace a little less... haggard? ★★☆☆ (Oct 2006)

FINE DINING

HARDWARE GRILL (9638 JASPER AVE.) Arguably one of the best restaurants in Edmonton. Be warned however, if you go, it's an undertaking. Definitely not the type of place you just pop into with friends on a whim for a light casual

meal. Be prepared to fast for at least a week before going, and hibernate afterwards. (portions are way too big and priced accordingly). Definitely a special occasion restaurant. ★★☆☆ (Feb 2007)

MADISON'S GRILL (10057 JASPER AVE.) Without a doubt, Madison's is one of the top restaurants in Edmonton. The warm and comfortable surroundings make this a perfect place for a romantic getaway, or for that special occasion. ★★☆☆ (July 2006)

VEGETARIAN

PADMANADI (10626-97 ST.) Padmanadi offers wonderful Malaysian style vegetarian food at more than reasonable prices. Everything on the menu is vegan friendly, and everyone in the place is friendly to vegans. Or non-vegans for that matter. They're just plain nice. ★★☆☆ (Sept 2006)

CAFÉ

MILL CREEK CAFÉ (9562-82 AVE.) If you're visiting Edmonton and staying downtown, walk south down the stairs at the MacDonald, cross the bridge, and head into Mill Creek ravine. Follow the path, go up the hill at the Mill Creek Pool parking lot and wander right to the Mill Creek Café for a light bite to eat. That way, you'll experience both the great geography and the small town hospitality we're so proud of. ★★☆☆ (Oct 2006)

KOREAN

GAYA (11147-87 AVE.) ONE HOT little shikdang. Reasonably priced Korean food in hole-in-the-wall surroundings. Be prepared to wait for a table, and don't expect to linger after you've finished. Well worth it nonetheless. ★★☆☆ (Nov 2006)

INDIAN

TANDOORI GRILL EXPRESS & MONTREAL DELI (6508-75 ST.) Despite the odd menu, these folks are really capable of some fine cuisine. If you go, spend some time chatting with the folks and see if they can prepare any of your favourites. If so, you just might find that you have a new favourite tandoori restaurant in town. ★★☆☆ (Dec 2006)

HAWELL (10220-103 ST.) Tasty food and excellent nan bread, but be warned—they do a lunch buffet. If that's your thing, this could well be your place. If it's not your thing, he say maybe try Hawell for dinner. ★★☆☆ (Feb 2007)

EUROPEAN

CONTINENTAL TREAT (10560-42 AVE.) Definitely not the type of place that hops to rattle-dazzle you with its creativity as the menu is largely standard (somehow) classic preparations of Eastern European favourites. It's the type of restaurant that used to set the standard for high-class dining, which can still be a nice treat if you're willing to buy into the type of experience they're offering. ★★☆☆ (Dec 2006)

HOTEL

HOTEL MACDONALD - CONFEDERATION LOUNGE (10205-100 ST.) Wondering whatever happened to the grand old tradition of hotel dining? It's at the Hotel Macdonald. But if you're not up to dropping some large coin on a meal just to have the experience, pop by the Mac's Confederation Room for a glass of wine and a bite to eat. It's a guilty pleasure everyone should experience once in a while. ★★☆☆ (Dec 2006)

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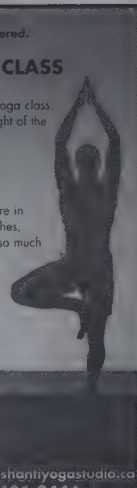
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...ARE QUITE NAFF.... THEY'RE
...AT ALL. JUST A LIVE PA SETUP.
—THE SHAPESHIFTERS' SIMON MARLIN



Just Press Play?

PREVIEW • REAL LIVE DANCE • BY YURI WUENSCH | 129 words

Prepare the Party Dance duo Shapeshifters promise more than a same-old, same-old DJ set. PHOTO SUPPLIED

THE U.K.'S GENRE-STRADDLING SHAPESHIFTERS COME TO EDMONTON WITH MORE THAN A CD WALLET IN THEIR POCKET

THE SHAPESHIFTERS

w/ Nestor Delano and Mikey Wong, Thu, Dec. 13: The Bank Ultra Lounge (10765 Jasper Ave.). Tickets: \$15 at the door. Info: 893-9400

DJs are boring. They sashay into town, play *other* people's records, clap their hands, grin like beatific dolt, and seldom leave a real impression on the heard-it-all-before crowds who are probably (luckily) too high or drunk to remember anyway.

As such, one can't help but feel a little cheated by the Shapeshifters, the U.K.-based duo of Simon Marlin and Max Reich, who will be playing Edmonton this week—but not in their more innovative guise as part of a seven-piece house music dance band.

Over the phone from West London, Marlin, 38, empathizes because the Shapeshifters' live act really is that good. He can't, however, say the same for other dance bands he's managed to catch live.

"A lot of them are quite naft, to be honest," he says. "They're really not bands at all, just a live PA setup. This year, we've mainly been touring as DJs. We make sure it's billed properly, because it can be very frustrating for people when they hope to see someone perform live and that person just shows up with a CD wallet."

The advent of an honest-to-gosh live dance band is the kind of thing that might lend electronic music some more credibility in the eyes of skeptics who decry what they see as the genre's use of technology as a crutch. The Shapeshifters have great crossover potential, Marlin realizes, but when he and Reich first met in 1996, neither of them were

setting out to form a band. In fact, it would take them until 2003 before they finally started producing music together.

The wait was apparently worth it. Their first single, an uplifting feel-good house anthem dubbed "Lola's Theme" (named in honour of late-night listening sessions with Marlin's missus), went to #1 in the U.K. and spent eight weeks atop the national airplay chart. The massive tune got The Shapeshifters nominated for a Brit Award in 2004 and it's picked up numerous house music awards since then. Their debut album, *Sound Advice*, was released in 2006, with a followup, *Do Not Disturb*, due out in early 2008.

"On the new album, as writers, we've developed a lot more," Marlin says. "The last album gave us a lot more confidence in writing this one. It's a bit more electronic—we've got a lot more toys that we've used—but we still used a lot of strings and

brass and acoustic elements. There are a couple of midtempo and downtempo songs on the album as well. We're kind of moving on in that respect, I suppose."

In fact, their next single to be released in the U.K. clocks in at only about 90 beats per minute, which hardly makes for a banging club track. And while it probably won't figure into a headlining Shapeshifters DJ set, Marlin is glad of the band's progression all the same, which reflects a non-commercial musical sensibility he and Reich have always shared.

"When we did 'Lola's Theme,'" he says, "we could have played in every club around the world, whether it was cool or not. We actually got offered a lot more money to play the shit clubs. And we didn't do that. We stayed true to what we believe in, and that's underground house music."

"People who have success, but don't have experience, tend to fuck it

up quite quickly. Fortunately, we've had a lot of experience. Sometimes people go for the money straightaway, and that's a mistake."

Working in the industry onstage and behind the scenes for years, Marlin has witnessed the rise and fall of many "superstar" DJs. He's also seen DJ technology making quantum leaps—both for better and worse. While they're pleased to push the boundaries of dance music as a band, their approach to their DJ sets might best be described by the title of another of their hits: "Back to Basics."

"We don't rely on tricks," he says. "We can hold and entertain a crowd by playing records rather than all the nonsense that would make it look like I'm sending e-mails. Yes, it's very clever what some people can do, but the interaction with the crowd and the energy you create from moving turntables and mixing records is being lost with technology."

PREVIEW • SAD SONGS ARE NATURE'S ONIONS • BY ZOLTAN VARADI | 560 words

Diamond Mine

**FORMER ROGER VOCALIST
RAKES THE ASHES FOR A
GLINT OF INSPIRATION**

DARREN FRANK

Sat, Dec 15, Axis Café (10349 Jasper Ave.). Tickets: \$8 at the door

Transcendence may be a universal artistic theme, but at this time of year, as the reality of another long bleak winter begins to play with your emotions, it's easy to think of the struggle to overcome the cold's grey grip on your soul as a uniquely (and absolutely necessary) Canadian concern.

"It is so true," agrees local musician Darren Frank, whose new EP, *Coal to Diamond*, explores themes of resiliency and what he describes as the "Ping Pong match" between elation and depression. "I talk about my situation and it's easily relatable. You feel a little bit more connected through that. I think it makes for some really honest art. There's a sort of exposed character to everything, and that's instantly the most honest stuff."

As we speak, Frank is sitting in his south-facing kitchen, getting as juiced as possible on the short supply of vitamin D from the December sun's errant rays. (He mentions he's thinking of getting a SAD lamp.) But he admits that, even if he wrote them somewhere else, his approach to the songs on *Coal to Diamond* wouldn't have differed much.

The recording process began over a year ago, around the time his group Roger started to splinter. That, combined with some "personal" matters, led him in the direction of penning tracks that alternate between melancholy and hope.

"That was tough," he says of Roger's implosion. "Breaking away from something like that you wonder, 'Will I ever find that again—people who



Transmundane: Darren Frank turns workaday woes into songwriting gold. PHOTO BY ERIC DUFFY

ed"—Frank's solo gamble seems have been a move in the right direction. The five tracks on the EP, although recorded in three different locations, flow seamlessly, and the production has a crisp, atmospheric feel, while Frank's voice could hold its own against singers like Peter Dinklage and

times [you can't] polish a turd."

Thankfully, that phrase doesn't apply to *Coal to Diamond*, a blend of mellifluous melodies strengthened by his rich but restrained vocals. And if you're under the impression that it's a dark, self-indulgent affair, think again—it's as celebratory as it

"BREAKING AWAY FROM SOMETHING LIKE THAT YOU WONDER, 'WILL I EVER FIND THAT AGAIN—PEOPLE CAN DO THESE THINGS?' BUT I NEEDED TO DO THIS MYSELF. I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THE DEAL WAS A YEAR AND A HALF AGO—I JUST STARTED PLAYING SHOWS WITH MYSELF AND A GUITAR, AND IT BECAME QUITE APPARENT THAT THAT'S WHAT I HAD TO DO FOR A WHILE." — DARREN FRANK ON THE IMPLICATION OF HIS PREVIOUS BAND, ROGER

can do these things?' But I needed to do this by myself. I didn't know what the deal was a year and a half ago—I just started playing shows with myself and a guitar, and it became quite apparent that that's what I had to do for awhile."

While he has nothing but kind words for his former bandmates—"Until the day I die," he says, "I will put them in the fold of musicians that I respect; they're all insanely talent-

Ron Sexsmith, both of whom he feels creatively indebted to.

Frank credits his time in Grant MacEwan's music program with helping him develop the skills to hone such a polished product, but he also knows that mere technique only gets you so far.

"You take that raw product and start to shape it," he says, "and in the end you can really buff it and shine it. But I don't know... I've heard this term 100

is sad. It's about turning those coals into diamonds, after all.

"There's a certain amount of resilience that I'm impressed by, in myself and others, just going through the things that they do," Frank concludes. "It's like a chiseling kind of thing, you know? You may think of it as wearing you down, but it's actually the taking off of layers and getting close to the core."

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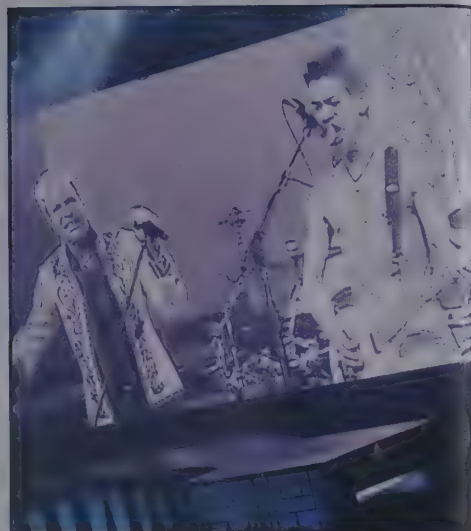


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CONCERT REVIEW • **'80S NIGHT** • BY FISH GRIWKOWSKY (420 words)

Dad Rocks



Finally, *The Big Time* | Eddie and David Lee share some screen time. PHOTO BY FISH GRIWKOWSKY

VAN HALEN CAN'T BELIEVE THEY'RE STILL GETTING AWAY WITH IT

VAN HALEN
 Dec. 9, Rexall Place

There are no calls of "WHERE'S MICHAEL ANTHONY?" as David Lee Roth emerges waving a king-size crimson flag—this crowd is too familiar to taunt Eddie's bass-playing son.

Diamond Dave, meanwhile, seems minuscule to anyone who caught his deadly solo show at Ed's a year ago, comparing that audience to a nearly sold-out arena show which Roth must by default share with the entire

opening to "I'll Wait," lighters raised as Roth strolled waving out onto the S-shaped catwalk. Who was playing the organ is a mystery during this and also the encore of "Jump" since Edward Van Halen sported only his guitar all night. But holy shit, did he.

Working a custom VH Wolfgang special, a brand I just realized he named his kid after, EVH took us on a stoner trip Roth would later describe in the most real moment of the show before "Ice Cream Man," daydreaming about failed joints rolling off Pink Floyd album covers. And for all his diminished high kicks and unmatched showmanship, what we really love about Roth is that he's

WHO WAS PLAYING THE ORGAN IS A MYSTERY, SINCE EDWARD VAN HALEN SPORTED ONLY HIS GUITAR ALL NIGHT. BUT HOLY SHIT, DID HE.

Van Halen family's solos.

But just in case you can't see him, he's the guy up there on the three-storey screen pretending to fuck the inside of a top hat, raising his left hand, then his right, then—both! Magic!—for the hat yet remains perched on his loins!

I drop most of a beer on my pants laughing so hard at this cheap erection joke and wonder how this generation of derivative mass-market label entertainers has the fucking gaul to mock the '80s when, at best and despite themselves, all they produce in an entire year is maybe one record as good as Van Halen's "Diver Down."

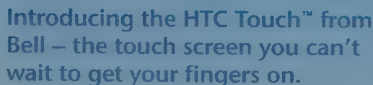
The purest expression of this band's beauty came during the synth

just a gross dude who cannot believe the number of blowjobs he's gotten, just by acting like rum is best with a couple scoops of coke. Trying to pass on the virus, Roth turned out to be the one to tease chubby 16-year-old Wolfgang, saying he'd be getting laid by some of Edmonton's finest.

"Give me a break, Dave," the kid shot back hilariously, his bad-goated dad's wedding ring sparkling up on the movie screen.

It was a weird, wonderful show many times better than that Police gig, Eddie and Dave's fatless, grinning old bodies looking like mastodon schlongs, sure. But tell me you wouldn't stare curiously at one laying on the table in front of you for awhile.

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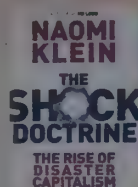
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PREVIEW • **SMALL TOWN SUPERSTARS** • BY EAMON MCGRATH | 54 words

You Saw Them When?

SASKATOON'S BLOOD LINES ARE ALREADY PLAYING TO THE MASSES—IN CHINA, AT LEAST

BLOOD LINES

w/ Aurora, Fri, Dec 14, Victory Lounge (10030 102 St).
Tickets: \$10 at the door

Every rock 'n' roll legend starts out in a tiny club. Even the greats had to cut their teeth playing in hole-in-the-wall venues to handfuls of (mostly uninterested) people. But one single moment comes in the career of every musical giant when their popularity explodes, and they go from being little-known leaders of small groups of devoted fans to massive pop-culture superstars.

Saskatoon's Blood Lines seem to be on the verge of such an explosion,

and in some parts of the world—China, for example, where only last year the Blood Lines shared a bill with Nine Inch Nails and Public Enemy at the Beijing Pop Festival, playing in front of thousands of people—they've already gotten there.

"It just fell into place," recalls Blood Lines keyboardist Maygen Kardash. "There was a cancellation of another band and it just worked out. We had to be formally invited by the government. Needless to say, we kept the letter."

Kardash joined the Blood Lines after meeting its members while working as a waitress in a Saskatoon venue. Her initial role in the Blood Lines was as drummer, but the move to keyboards during their first jam was a moment in the history that has taken on a mythic aura for the band: according to Kardash, everything fell into place so effortlessly, there was no doubt in any of their minds that something huge—the chance play in front of thousands of people on a bill with a band like Public Enemy in China, perhaps?—was going to befall them all.

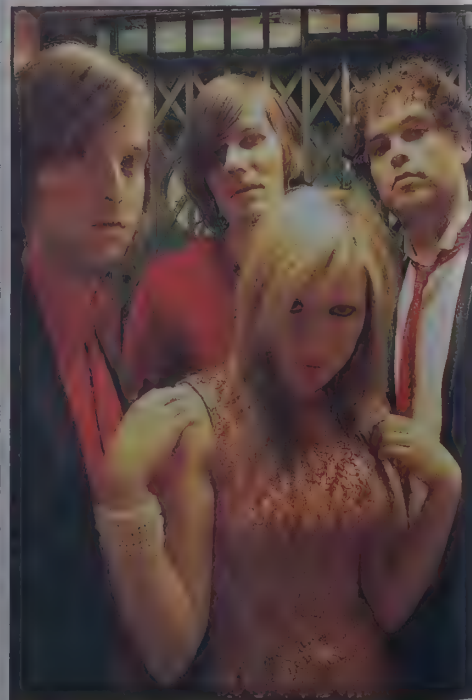
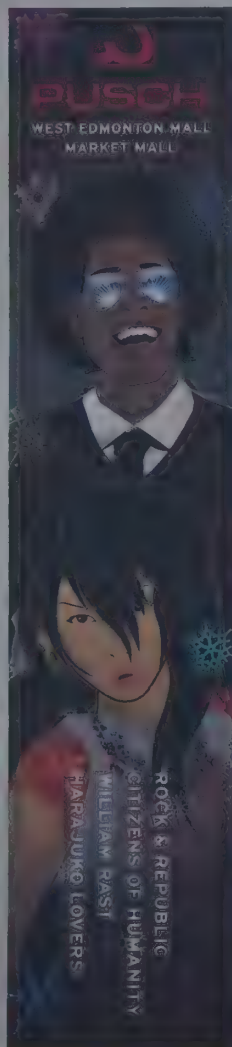
"The first time we ever jammed, we were like, 'This is going to be the band,'" Kardash remembers. "There was chemistry between all of us. Maybe it's a family dynamic that makes it such an interesting chemistry, but it exists—the chemistry is

there, and everything is easy and enjoyable and special."

For the Blood Lines, popularity overseas has come to them without much effort, but cracking the music scene back home has been more of a challenge. "Reception in Canada is different," Kardash says. "It's a music community, and it's ready to embrace you as one of their own. Here, people talk to you at shows. In China, it was like 'instant stardom.' People were giddy. When I went out afterwards into the crowd, there was one girl that asked me if she could take my picture, and suddenly there were hundreds of flashes going off."

Kardash knows how surreal it all sounds, especially to members of the Canadian and Saskatoon music community she's grown up with and played with for years. One minute, the Blood Lines are rocking the house for thousands of people at one of the world's biggest music festivals, then they're back in Canada playing punk rock clubs, some of which barely hold 200. But it still feels like they're going to fill stadiums someday. After all, they've done it once already.

"It kind of felt like we were blazing a bit of a trail," Kardash admits. "Anything is possible, and I think that that's the story of our band. Every day we're thinking of new ways to get out there and bring our music to the widest audience we can."



Blood Brothers (and Sister) Are the Blood Lines the next big thing? PHOTO SUPPLIED

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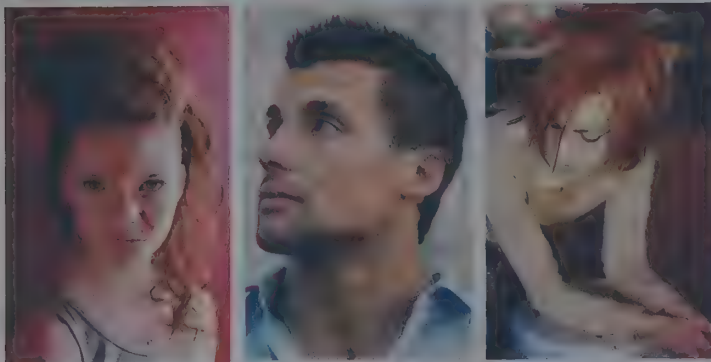
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CD REVIEWS

DAFT PUNK

Alive 2007

(Virgin)

★★★★☆



Those meticulous Frenchmen (or French-bots) in Daft Punk have created something remarkable: an album with the rapturous immediacy of a great live record and the honed craftsmanship of a studio creation. Spanning the length of DF's career, *Alive 2007*'s 12 tracks each take two of the duo's best songs and mashes them together, so 2005's "Television Rules the Nation" meshes perfectly into 2001's "Crescendolls", and "One More Time" and "Aerodynamic" come together even better than they do on *Discovery*, where they originally butted heads. A fucking amazing party record, and a great headphones album to boot, *Alive 2007* might be Daft Punk's best release yet. Pretty good for a band a lot of people had written off after their last studio effort (the under-rated albeit still-not-great *Human After All*). It's just too bad they won't be putting out a DVD. The world needs another great concert film, guys—and for one can't get enough of those shiny robo-suits. **MATTHEW HALLIDAY**

JUNIOR

BLOOMSDAY

Nervous Habits

(Roast)

★★★★☆



What started as songwriter Jeff Wickstrom's bedroom lo-fi folk project has transformed into a pop music behemoth with *Nervous Habits*, his debut full-length and his first release on local label Roast Records. *Habits* is thick with synthesizers, programmed drumbeats, Wickstrom's crooning vocals, and an orchestra of digital instruments, all teetering on the edge of cheeseball but miraculously holding onto brilliance instead. The key ingredient is Junior Bloom's love of pure, unapologetic pop, which he wears on his sleeve with the sincerity of a 14-year-old who's just had his life changed by punk rock—imagine the Jesus and Mary

Chain if they replaced their squal of soaking wet guitar feedback with tinny drum machines and then cranked up the Phil Spector part of their sound while turning down the volume on the anger and debauchery. Junior Bloom's debut raises the bar high for solo artists in Edmonton. It's nothing short of a seminal document of our underground music scene in the first decade of the 21st century—and with any luck, it'll make Wickstrom work twice as hard on his next record. **EAMON MCGRATH**

THE HIVES

The Black and White Album

(BMG/Octone)

★★★★☆



Near the end of "Try It Again," the second track on their new disc *The Black and White Album*, The Hives quote Albert Einstein's observation that "The definition of madness is doing the same thing and expecting a different result." (Some people attribute the quote to Thomas Jefferson, but it sounds funnier for an aggressively stooped band like The Hives to be quoting Einstein.) Anyway, that might be the reason why the well-dressed Scandinavian garage-rockers have decided to tinker a little with their formula on this outing, recording many of the tracks in Mississippi instead of Sweden and even inviting hip-hop mastermind Pharrell Williams from The Neptunes to produce a couple of tracks. That may sound like a dubious matchup, but in fact, the two Williams tracks are among the album's highlights—especially "THE HIVES," which takes a quintessential Hives chant and gives it a soaring space-funk makeover. But don't panic: "Tick Tick Boom," "Hey Little World," and "Giddy Up!" deliver plenty of the high-energy guitar riffs and the cheerfully nonsensical, yelped-out lyrics Hives fans have come to expect, with only a couple of slower, more experimental tracks to slow the disc's momentum. Four discs into their career, and The Hives still seem to be having more fun than any other band on the planet. **PAUL MATWYCHUK**

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MUSIC • SINGLE DIGIT | 500 words

No More Finger Food?



EAR TO THE ASPHALT **ANN VRIED**
NATALIE MACMASTER'S
GUITARIST RISKS IF NOT LIFE,
AT LEAST LIMB

Cape Breton fiddler Natalie MacMaster is a classy, world-renowned talent who, despite an enviable level of success—complete with tour buses and babysitters—still has had her share of road trials.

First of all, MacMaster is tackling her nonstop tour with two kids under the age of two in tow, which definitely doesn't conjure up the classic sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll image of musicians on tour. (Then again, of course, neither does Celtic fiddling.) My entire interview with MacMaster was constantly interrupted by

cries and yells from Michael, her infant son, who "was so good until about 20 minutes ago!" according to MacMaster, exhausted by a long day spent juggling interviews and soothing.

Yet somehow MacMaster is able to dig up a particularly traumatic (and potentially career-killing) story of road woes.

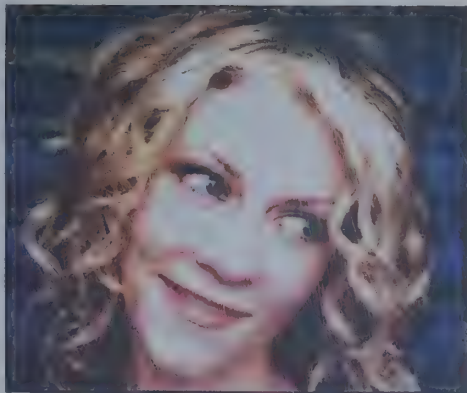
"We were driving after a show one night," she begins, "and having a great time. We sat around and played tunes, it was really cool. That doesn't happen for me very much anymore because of the children, but it was doubly good, because Mary Francis [MacMaster's firstborn] was really content; she was just sitting there with my cousin, who was babysitting." (I assume the babysitter was for the kids, not the band.)

"Eventually I had to get Mary Francis to bed. I fell asleep with her in the back of the bus, though the guys stayed up playing." Touring of any sort never seems to lend itself to privacy, let alone quality of sleep

"Then I woke up. The bus was stopped. Apparently the bus had taken the wrong exit, so we had to turn around. We were carrying a trailer on the back with some gear, and when the bus driver tried to turn around it was difficult, so everybody decided to take the trailer off the bus so it would be easier." Ah, the glamour of wrenches, jacks, and dark highways.

"But everybody was in such good cheer after singing songs and everything," MacMaster claims. "And Brad [Davidge, MacMaster's guitarist and a solo artist in his own right] decided he was going to help with the trailer hitch. But they had to lift the trailer up, and something happened, and the trailer hitch came down, right on Brad's finger."

And in one moment, everything very nearly changed. You can imagine MacMaster and her band huddled on the dark highway, gawking at their guitarist's mangled hand. (For those of you who don't play guitar, the thing about that instrument is,



Just Call CAA: Natalie MacMaster will get her roadside assistance from the pros from now on. PHOTO SUPPLIED

you need fingers.)

"Of course we still had this tour to do," MacMaster says, "and it was really quite devastating. At that point we didn't know if he would ever be able to play again. It turns out he was able to save most of the finger, he basically ended up losing the tip, but it was his right hand. So the finger-picking stuff he didn't do for a

while, he had to learn. It was really tough."

"Which finger was it?" I ask, shuddering, being a pianist myself.

"It was the middle finger." Pause. "And he was just trying to be helpful!"

Natalie MacMaster plays
 The Arden Theatre in St. Albert
 on Thursday, December 13

MUSIC • THE KISS OF DEATH AWARDS | 599 words

Grammy Goofs Edition



LOST IN THE SUPERMARKET **ZOLTAN VARDI**
GRAMMY'S ESSENTIAL
ARTISTS: JAZZY JEFF, JETHRO
TULL, AND MILLI VANILLI

Out-of-touch old men jacking each other off. ENOUGH!

That's Nine Inch Nails' Trent Reznor calling for an end to the Grammys. Nominees for the awards, now in its 50th year, were announced last week, with Kanye West and Amy Winehouse leading the list of nominees.

Reznor's not alone. Every year, a horde of critics emerges to decry the big industry backlash, but perhaps the judges are simply more forward-thinking than their time allowed them to be? Only now, 18 years after

the fact, has it become clear that Jethro Tull really did deserve to win the trophy for Best Hard Rock/Heavy Metal Performance over Metallica (by virtue of the fact that the latter are such extreme putzes, of course).

That's a dissenting opinion though; people are still squawking over the slight. In fact the Tull/Metallica controversy takes the outside slot in the All Things Entertainment blog's "Top 5 Grammy Goofs," which also includes DJ Jazzy Jeff & The Fresh Prince's win over Public Enemy in the Rap category, the same year the Academy sent Metallica home empty-handed, and The New Vaudeville Band's "Winchester Cathedral" beating out the Monkees' "Last Train to Clarksville," the Beach Boys' "Good Vibrations," The Mamas and the Papas' "Monday, Monday," and the Beatles' "Eleanor Rigby" in 1966.

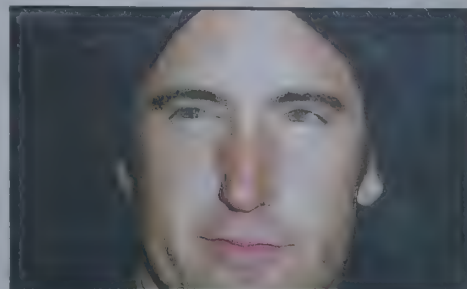
The website also takes issue with A Taste of Honey's besting of Elvis Costello in the 1979 Best New Artist race (once again, I'm not sure I agree... "Boogie Oogie Oogie" is

damn catchy song) and Milli Vanilli's triumphant Best New Artist victory in 1990 (via *ivillage*).

Zep Lively

Some not-so-instant karma went down backstage at the Led Zeppelin reunion concert in Greenwich, England this past Monday, as convicted personal-assistant abuser Naomi Campbell reportedly was heard causing a fuss after the theft of her purse, which apparently housed two cellphones. Sounds more like pre-emptive medicine than a crime to me. (Campbell was found guilty of assault last January after she hucked a phone at a maid.)

And while the Zep set sounded stellar indeed—they kicked off with "Good Times, Bad Times" and wrapped up their revue of moments thereof with "Rock and Roll"—the real musical gems were saved for a select few at an after-party that featured entertainment by the likes of Sam Moore, Percy Sledge, and Solomon Burke.



Awake Me Like an Animal: Trent Reznor hates the Grammys. So, juggling to give back 'til he's blue? PHOTO SUPPLIED

Global = Go Goings

Here's an early Christmas present for Clash/Joe Strummer fans: the late, great rocker's wife Lucinda and the couple's friend, renowned British artist Damien Hirst, are teaming up on a book of art, lyrics, and other tour ephemera that Strummer tended to accumulate and produce on the road.

Lucinda Strummer apparently discovered a cache of suitcases, some dating back to the Clash days, full of everything from cartoons to never-recorded verses, in a private room used by the packrat punk to store his globetrotting booty, most of it

products of his own singular imagination.

No date for the release of the collection has yet been scheduled. Ms. Strummer told one U.K. rag, "It's not something that's going to be rushed into, it's going to be beautifully done. It'll be like an art book, with photographs, lyrics, drawings, maybe unreleased songs, rarities. It'll have CDs in it, rare Joe stuff—we'll see what we've got." (via *The Independent* online)

Party 'Til You Burn the Studio Down

Oh to be a fly on the wall during these sessions...

Two of the industry's stranger personalities have teamed up after reportedly becoming all buddy-like at this past year's SXSW festival in Austin: dub genius/nutbar Lee "Scratch" Perry and motivational speaker/party guru Andrew WK are working together on the latter's recording, *Repentance*, due for completion next spring.

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REVIEW • REPLICANTS • BY SCOTT LINGLEY | *with words*

Harrison Battles the Pink Robots

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Directed by Ridley Scott. Starring Harrison Ford, Sean Young, Rutger Hauer, Daryl Hannah. Now playing.

★★★★☆

Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* receives its 25th anniversary return to the big screen in what's being touted as the "final cut," perhaps to distinguish it from the "director's cut" that was hustled out on home video for the film's 10th anniversary. If you're willing to shell out for a deluxe five-DVD set, you'll find out that there's yet another edit that very few people have seen—an early "workprint" version that confused test audiences enough to prompt Warner Brothers to insist on all the changes to Scott's vision which he tried to undo in subsequent anniversary versions.

Whether you trust the studio's creative judgment or not, the version that came out in 1982 established *Blade Runner* as a modern sci-fi classic and might have given Harrison Ford his first real acting challenge after he'd already established his movie hero charisma in the first two *Star Wars* movies and *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. *The Final Cut* dispenses with some of the studio-mandated tweaks—most notably an excessively explanatory voiceover and an unwarranted upbeat ending—while adding a few scenes, extending a few others, and giving the special effects a 21st-century shine-job.

Ford stars as Rick Deckard, the titular "blade runner" whose job it is to chase rogue clones (called "replicants") in the ever-nearing future of 2019. Four state-of-the-art replicants



Built Ford Tough | Harrison Ford returns to L.A. in *Blade Runner: The Final Cut*. PHOTO SUPPLIED

have escaped their indentured servitude on a spacecraft, killed the crew and headed back to Earth, where they hope to prolong their tragically brief, factory-installed lifespans. Deckard is hauled out of retirement to hunt down these super-clones but in the process becomes emotionally involved with Rachel (Sean Young), the replicant secretary of Dr. Tyrell, the powerful scientist-CEO who created them.

My own reaction to *Blade Runner*—in any version—is indelibly imprinted with my initial experience as a 12-year-old unaccountably watching it on a big screen without the accompaniment of an adult guardian. Now, as then, I'm pulled into the immersive, claustrophobic world Scott created with production designer Syd Mead and visual effects supervisor Douglas Trumbull from the opening shot—a vista of future Los Angeles shrouded in angry red smog and periodically obscured by balls of fire from rooftop flares around which hover-cars circle and float. This shot, accompanied by Vangelis'

slightly flatulent synths-and-sax score, sets the tone for a movie perpetually cloaked in muggy darkness, streaked with neon and slicked with rain, and establishes L.A. as a backdrop as distinctive and forbidding as the celebrated sets conceived by H.R. Giger for Scott's *Alien*.

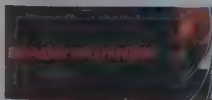
As a 12-year-old I failed to recognize Scott's obvious nods to film noir, but there was no missing *Blade Runner*'s troubling undercurrent of angst. Deckard's backstory was left on the cutting-room floor, but it's plain he lives an isolated existence cluttered with regret, and as his feelings deepen for Rachel, so do his qualms about hunting down and killing similarly sentient, albeit engineered, souls. The escaped replicants are styled as gruesome (albeit sexy) punk-rock outcasts, but Scott makes their desperate bid for survival and their reliance on one another strangely affecting. The violence in the film is calculated to be protracted, brutal, and horrifying, and seems no less so now than when I was 12.

Ford is surprisingly good in the lead, pushed past his usual repertoire of smirks and grimaces to a brooding, wounded introspection when he's not showing outright agony and fear. Just about everyone else in the movie matches him, starting with Rutger Hauer as Roy Batty, leader of the replicants. His crazed, unblinking gaze and rueful grin perfectly impart a sense of the godlike powers and childlike emotional innocence united in him. Sean Young is simultaneously robotic and vulnerable as Rachel, practically drowning in her retro-glamorous hairstyle, red lipstick, and shoulder pads. A solid supporting cast of character actors including M. Emmet Walsh, William Sanderson, Ioe Turkel, and Brion James are reliably good and, to this day, I'm still frightened by Daryl Hannah as the lithe, gymnastic berserker Pris.

Refurbishing *Blade Runner* for the 21st century hasn't repaired all of its flaws. Getting rid of the voiceover is a great improvement, but its absence points out the flatness and goofi-

Blade Runner cont'd pg 32

DVD DICTATOR • THE MOVIES YOU MUST BUY THIS TUESDAY



BLADE RUNNER: ULTIMATE COLLECTOR'S EDITION

You'll definitely want to catch Ridley Scott's "final cut" of his landmark 1982 sci-fi adventure on the big screen (see our review above), but you'll want to revisit it at home on this five-disc bordering-on-overkill DVD edition, which contains everything except its own Voight-Kampff Empathy Test machine.



THE SIMPSONS MOVIE

"I want 10,000 tough guys, and I want 10,000 soft guys to make the tough guys look tougher. And I want them arranged in the following order: tough, soft, tough, tough, soft, tough, soft, soft..." Ah, Albert Brooks: what would this funny but somewhat-disappointing movie have done without you?



ONCE

Sweeney Todd has yet to arrive in theatres, but even though the Dictator is a diehard Sondheim fan, he has a hard time imagining that it will dislodge their no-budget Irish miracle from its perch as the year's finest musical. And if Glen Hansard doesn't win an Oscar for Best Song, there'll be hell to pay.



MR. WARMTH: THE DON RICKLES PROJECT

John Landis directs this affectionate tribute to the octogenarian insult comic, whose caustic style blazed a trail followed by everyone from Richard Pryor to Sarah Silverman. A diverse group of fans—Chris Rock, Sidney Poitier, Martin Scorsese, Clint Eastwood—reward Rickles' abuse with accolades.



flatness and goofiness of the rest of the dialogue. For all its visual and tonal coherence, aspects of *Blade Runner's* narrative and the world it's set in feel underexplained. Then there's Scott's penchant for gratuitous, heavy-handed symbolism like the unicorn that stampedes through one of Deckard's reveries. (The director's proclivity for artless stylistic flourishes would come to fruition some years later in the in vapid, overblown, multiple Oscar-winning

Gladiator.)

I'm actually glad not all of the warts have been expunged from this new, improved version of *Blade Runner*. As Scott's films increasingly tout technical skill over storytelling and characterization, *Blade Runner's* inadvertent awkwardness at least suggests a sincere interest in the state—and destiny—of the human soul. Do yourself a favour and take advantage of this rare opportunity to see it on the big screen.

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This One's for the Kids



Inflation Is Out of Control! Albert Lamorisse's *The Red Balloon* floats back into movie theatres. PHOTO SUPPLIED

CAN A PAIR OF CLASSIC KIDDIE FLICKS FROM THE '50S STILL FIND AN AUDIENCE? WHAT IF THEY'RE FRENCH?

THE RED BALLOON/WHITE MANE
Directed by Albert Lamorisse, Dec 15-16, 18, Metro Cinema
(Zeilinger Hall, Citadel Theatre).

★★★★☆

One day, when I was in elementary school, my teacher showed our class a movie, a National Film Board film-strip (probably), about a child's toy canoe that gets lost in the St. Lawrence Seaway (I think), where it's dwarfed by the hulking, industrial-sized cargo ships coming and going

hazy, impressionistic memories of Albert Lamorisse's classic children's films, which are being currently being trotted out again in new prints for the North American arthouse circuit.

His best-known film, *The Red Balloon*, is a waking dream of a film that seems like something you've seen once before, long ago, even if you haven't. It follows a Parisian boy who finds a big red balloon tied to a lamp-post one day on his way to school. The balloon befriends him and follows him around the city until their friendship reaches its predictable end—it's only a balloon, after all. But that's not quite the end of things, as

Balloon and every bit as beautiful, with its panoramic landscapes of southern France, the marshy bog through which herds of wild horses gallop, and especially, a lengthy battle between *White Mane* and a rival horse (stunningly photographed, but surely not Humane Society-approved). The slow pace and dulled rhythms, though, are from another time and another culture, and I don't know if Canadian kids in 2007 will enjoy a film that was intended for French kids in 1952. *White Mane* lacks any kind of musical cues or ambient sound to clue the viewer in on how they're supposed to be feeling—an interesting move, but kids

THE RED BALLOON IS A PERFECT KIDS' FILM, ONE THAT ANY CHILD WHO'S EVER FELT SHACKLED BY THE OPPRESSIVE DULLNESS OF THE GROWN-UP WORLD (SCHOOL, MOST NOTABLY) WILL RELATE TO.

all around it. Inside the canoe was a little Indian figure, helplessly frozen in wood, staring into the grey, cold waters, threatened on all sides by the massive hulls of the cargo ships crowding around him. I don't know what that movie was called, what it was actually about (beyond that vague description), where it came from, or even how old I was when I saw it—but I certainly remember it, albeit more as a vague impression, a memory of a memory, than as a film. Twenty-some years later, I can still recall rooting for that little canoe and that little man inside, bobbing helplessly along.

I'm sure a lot of French people who grew up in the '50s have similarly

Lamorisse has a wonderful, colourful coda that ups the whimsical ante in time to resolve what seems like a downbeat finish. Cute without being cloying, clever without being precious, *The Red Balloon* is a perfect kids' film, one that any child who's ever felt shackled by the oppressive dullness of the grown-up world (school, most notably) will relate to—and for grownups, it's also a curious look at a postwar Paris of concrete and brick, far from the romantic vision we have of the city today.

Less successful with modern audiences, I'm afraid, will be *White Mane*, about a boy and the wild horse he befriends. The movie is actually almost as good as *The Red*

who've had their senses numbed by the sensory overload of Hollywood children's films will probably just be bored and/or confused.

Which is unfortunate. Today, a kid's movie is unlikely to be a subtly involving, memorable experience—it's more likely to feature some crappy song by Smash Mouth and Eddie Murphy playing a braying jackass (God, I hate the *Shrek* movies.)

But anyone who wants to see how a filmmaker can take nothing more than a balloon tied to a string and use it to conjure a world just as magical and involving as anything the tech-wizards in Hollywood can come up with would do well to check out these films.



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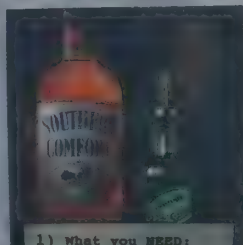
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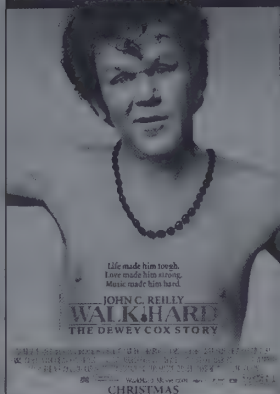
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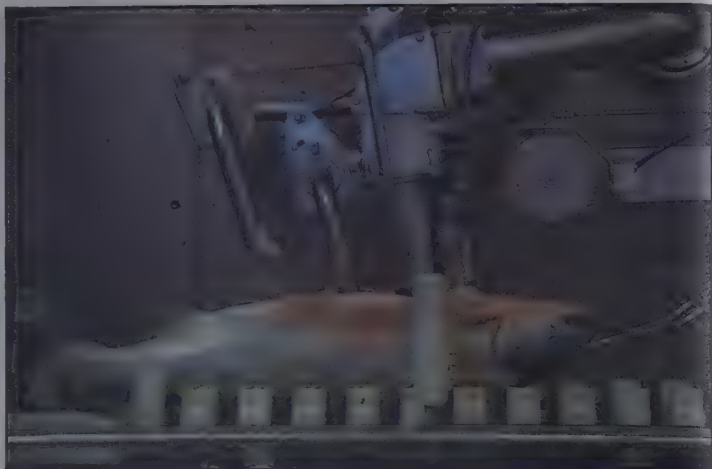
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SATURDAYS

INDIE ROCK ELECTRONIC NEW WAVE

Shooting Fish in a Barrel: A surreal image from Nikolaus Geyrhalter's *Our Daily Bread*. PHOTO SUPPLIED

REVIEW • DOCUMENTARY • BY PAUL MATWYCHUK (548 words)

Factory Showroom

OUR DAILY BREAD SHOWS, OFTEN IN GRISLY DETAIL, HOW THAT STEAK AND THOSE EGGS ARRIVED ON YOUR DINNER PLATE

OUR DAILY BREAD

Directed by Nikolaus Geyrhalter. Dec. 14, 16-17, 19, Metro Cinema (Zeidler Hall, The Citadel).

★★★★★

I think I may have gotten the wrong message from *Our Daily Bread*. But I guess you risk the audience misinterpreting you when you make a documentary that contains no interviews, no voiceover narration, no music, and no indication as to where any of the footage was shot—nothing, in fact, but images showing the full spectrum of the modern industrial food industry (or at least how that industry looked in Europe between 2003 and 2005, when the film was made).

I can easily see the film being a big hit with vegetarian/vegan organizations and groups promoting organic farming: director Nikolaus Geyrhalter succeeds in making food factories look like the eeriest, most unnatural places on earth—no place that employs people to run a gigantic stainless-steel pig-bisecting machine, and then employs another person whose sole job it is to take a knife and separate that last little bit of snout that the machine always misses, is a place I want to think about when I eat a pulled pork sandwich.

The film ends with a sequence showing a guy in a slaughterhouse at the end of the day hosing down every surface with some kind of concentrated soap—but the memory of this one cow desperately writhing in this restraining metal cylinder

before a worker knocks it out with a zap to its skull is not washed away so easily.

And yet... I also came away from this film dazzled by the ingenuity and the ruthless efficiency of some of the technology on display. Some of it is delightful—like the machine that drives around an orchard, grabbing each trunk and then furiously shaking the tree until all the fruit comes loose. Some of it is surreal in the way it mechanizes organic processes—like the moving cages with the metal gratings for floors where newborn pigs suckle their mothers' teats. And some of the sights are almost comically horrifying, like the

climb on top of a cow, but just as he's about to penetrate her, they grab his penis and shove it into a long tube instead with a plastic bag at the end of it. Talk about dexterity!

I had this same misguided reaction to *Koyaanisqatsi*, another wordless documentary which was supposed to show the ugliness of the human world but which I thought made industrialization look like kind of a miracle. Geyrhalter's film recalls *Koyaanisqatsi* in other ways as well, especially the meticulousness of its relentlessly symmetrical images, almost all of them shot from the same flat, neutral, dead-level angle. The film verges on appearing anti-

NO PLACE THAT EMPLOYS A PERSON WHOSE SOLE JOB IT IS TO TAKE A KNIFE AND SEPARATE THAT LITTLE BIT OF SNOT THE PIG-BIESCTING MACHINE ALWAYS MISSES IS A PLACE I WANT TO THINK ABOUT WHEN I EAT A PULLED PORK SANDWICH

vacuum tube that Hoovers chickens right off the dirt floor of their industrial barn, or the women who unemotionally take handfuls of baby chicks and stuff them down a vent and onto a conveyor belt leading God knows where.

You could say the human beings in this film have become machines as well, but the deftness with which they perform their ridiculously specialized functions within these factories is kind of phenomenal. Like the guy who's gotten hilariously good at sliding gutted fish onto metal holders, or the women who sort out pig guts all day long, or—most impressive of all—the guys who collect bull semen. (They wait for the bull to

human, but Geyrhalter shrewdly includes occasional images of break-time. And what do workers do when they're not snipping off pigs' feet or chicken heads? It seems they eat sandwiches, drink coffee, and smoke cigarettes just like the rest of us.

I can't imagine what kind of couple, out for a night at the movies, would choose to see *Our Daily Bread*, but it's a remarkable, oddly mesmerizing movie all the same. It might not have persuaded me to change my eating habits, but it made me damn glad I don't work on a lettuce farm—I could probably get used to slicing pig snouts, but picking lettuce looks like the most tedious, uncomfortable job in the world.



Magician, Murderer, Saint, Movie Star! Ginyan Lodro plays Thopaga, the versatile hero of *Milarepa*. PHOTO SUPPLIED

REVIEW • **TIBETAN** • BY MATT HUBERT | 506 words

Don't Fear the *Milarepa*

TURNING TIBETAN LEGEND INTO AN UNRESOLVED CLIFFHANGER WAS AN UNWISE MOVE FOR FILMMAKING MONK

MILAREPA: MAGICIAN, MURDERER, SAINT

Directed by Neten Chokling. Starring Ginyan Lodro, Orgyen Tobgyal, Kelsang Chukie Tethong. Fri-Wed, Dec 14-19. Metro Cinema (Zedler Hall, The Citadel).

★★★☆☆

When it comes to pet projects, first-time filmmakers like Neten Chokling get a little more critical leeway than more seasoned directors.

Whereas some of these films scream "Creative peak!" (as the Coen Brothers' *No Country for Old Men* recently did) and some labour awkwardly under the best intentions (as did Brian De Palma's *Redacted*), the creative darlings of new directors tend to have an appealing "go for broke" quality that makes you willing to forgive their shortcomings.

Chokling's *Milarepa: Magician, Murderer, Saint*, a retelling of one of the oldest and most influential stories in Tibet's oral tradition, is an almost quintessential "pet project": the first-time director is also the spiritual head of the Pema Ewam Choegar Gyurmeling Monastery.

Milarepa is the story of Thopaga (Ginyan Lodro), born to a wealthy

land-owning family in the Spiti Valley between India and Tibet in the 11th century. When Thopaga's father dies unexpectedly, the family is thrust into poverty and forced to work the land owned by Thopaga's cruel aunt and uncle. The family's wealth is to be held in trust by the domineering pair until Thopaga becomes of marrying age, at which point it will be returned.

But when his aunt and uncle fail to deliver on their promise, Thopaga is sent into the wilds of the Spiti Valley at the behest of his mother Kargyen (Tethong) to learn sorcery and enact vengeance upon the entire community for years of shame and humiliation.

Thopaga eventually studies under Yongten Trogayal (the stoic Orgyen Tobgyal) and learns the most intimate practices of black magic not typically reserved for normal students.

Sounds exciting, right? And it certainly is—plus, the film is full of subtly nuanced relationships (Thopaga's friendship with Dharma is particularly well-drawn) and the picturesque backdrop of the Spiti Valley, but just when you're getting caught up in the momentum of *Milarepa*'s excellent performances and Paul J. Warren's brilliant cinematography,

the whole thing comes to a sudden, jolting stop.

The traditional story builds up to the moment when Thopaga confronts the consequences of his anger and vengeance (this is where it roots itself in Buddhist teaching)—but the audience won't be privy to that part of the story until the film's sequel, slated for release in 2009. Then again, this is a long story, and producing a film on the scale of *Milarepa* is a complicated matter, so I suppose I'll have to remain patient.

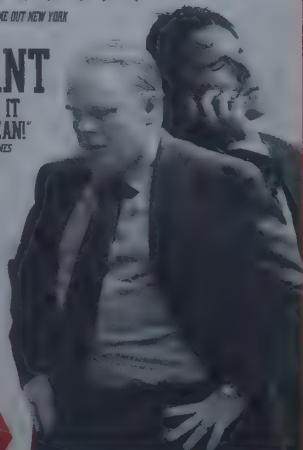
Very patient. Chokling's decision to break the film up into independent chapters means the relationship between Thopaga and his mother and the love story that was stirring in the beginning of the film are both left undeveloped. Just when Lodro begins to break Thopaga out of his feckless, boyish disposition and turn him into the "great mystic" we are supposed to believe him to be, the film ends.

Milarepa begins as an enticing and timely meditation on social injustice and concludes as only a somewhat fleshed-out folktale. Chokling's film has all the makings of an incendiary, captivating story, the monk might even "go for broke." We'll just have to wait and see.

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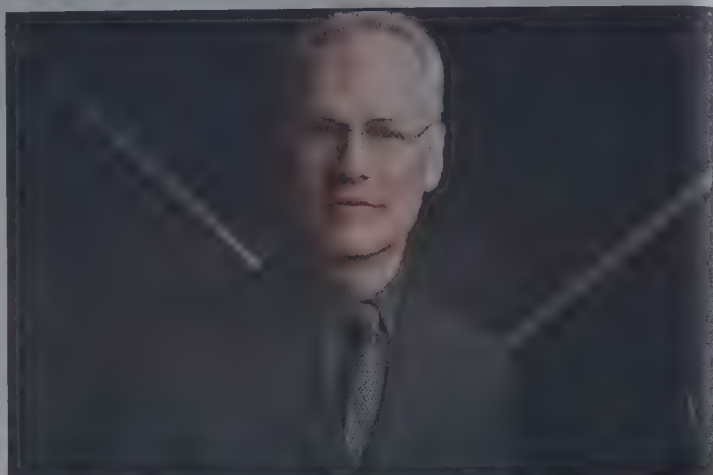
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TELEVISION - AMERICAN ENVY / 595 words

Gunn Control in Canada



Carry On, Canadians! Tim Gunn is making it work in the U.S. on Bravo! but not the Canadian version of the channel. PHOTO SUPPLIED



TELEPROMPTER NICOLA SIMPSON KHULLAR
I WISH I WERE AMERICAN, IF ONLY BECAUSE I WOULDN'T HAVE TO WAIT TO WATCH THE NEW SEASON OF PROJECT RUNWAY

Mr. Teleprompter regularly accuses me of watching too much TV and having "PVR abuse" issues. Well, he's probably right. But certainly I don't watch as much as I did a few years ago when I was living in Phila-

delphia. Tuesdays and Wednesdays were particularly demanding, as I tried to juggle *Gilmore Girls*, *House*, *SVU*, *American Idol*, *South Park*, and *Project Runway*. Work, work, work!

But there are days when I really miss watching TV in the U.S. of A. At least there you knew when a show was on and you could actually watch it.

Take *Project Runway*, for example. In the States, the fourth cycle of this enormously popular fashion design reality show is already a few weeks into its run on Bravo!, but we Canadians have to wait until January for it to show up on Slice here. The show's format has been so successful that it's spawned sister shows *Top Chef*, *Top Design*, and *Top Hair* (aka *Shear Genius*). But I have to search to find them here, as they show up respectively on Food, HGTV, and heaven only knows.

Now not only do I have to avoid PR spoilers online in order to fully enjoy the new season in January, but I'm also missing *Tim Gunn's Guide to Style*, which isn't showing up here anywhere! My life isn't exactly empty without his stern gay uncle impression, but I just hate knowing that I'm going thirsty at the water cooler.

And now, as far as I can tell, I'm going to miss *Celebrity Rehab*. I'm so curious about this VH1 show where I get to watch *Grease*'s Kenickie snort pixie dust through a Benjamin and Brigitte Nielsen drown her sorrows over the loss of Flav. Even a Baldwin and wrestler Chyna (aka Joanie Laurer) get worked over in this kind of reverse version of *Celebrity Fit Club* starting in January. But until they cast Britney and Lindsay, it prob-

ably won't be seen in Canada. Well, maybe on MuchMore.

So why does this happen? Well, the simple answer is that the Canadian licenses for these shows are always up for grabs. We simply don't get U.S. channels like Bravo!, Showtime, VH1, and FX.

Some people tell me that I should just keep up with all these shows online, where I can download (not so legally) shows like *Californication* and *Dexter*. There are illegal versions available for download around the web, they say. But I think I'm one of the last people in the world who doesn't like to watch TV on the computer. There's something evilly whole about sitting down and at least making an effort to mute or fast-forward through the commercials and trying to time your remote correctly when it comes back from the station promo. And my TV is a lot bigger than my computer screen, with better sound.

Salary Stalks at Midnight

Late-night TV is really gasping for air right now. Reruns due to the writers' strike are tanking in the ratings, and the hosts may soon start to regret their promise to continue paying their staff out of their own pockets. Comedy Central is picking up the tab for Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert's peeps, but Letterman and Leno are bleeding out to the tune of nearly \$250,000 a week.

Sure, they can afford it, but for how long? In theory, the networks are still saving \$1 million a week in production costs for each show while raking in money from advertisers, but I suspect that Jay Leno's Christmas list will start shrinking soon. Either that or he'll turn scab-

SEE a latte

MOVIES

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Prize: A double-guest pass to see *Before The Devil Knows You're Dead* at the Princess Theatre.
Skill-testing Question: The phrase "Before the Devil Know's You're Dead" is taken from which Irish toast?

Prize: A double-guest pass to see *Margot at the Wedding* at the Princess Theatre.
Skill-testing Question: Who was depicted on the cover of SEE last week?

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Man in Black | Will Smith is the last dog-owner on Earth in *Am Legend*. PHOTO SUPPLIED

OPENING THIS WEEK

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS

Jason Lee, David Cross, and Jane Lynch star in *Garfield: A Tale of Two Kitties* director Tim Hill's children's film about a struggling songwriter who finds the key to success when he adopts a trio of singing chipmunks, whom he proceeds to turn into musical superstars.

I AM LEGEND

Will Smith stars in *Constantine* director Francis Lawrence's blockbuster sci-fi thriller about the (seemingly) only human survivor of a virus that has transformed the rest of the world's population into monstrous, daylight-shunning "vampires." Based on the novel by Richard Matheson.

MARGOT AT THE WEDDING

Nicole Kidman, Jennifer Jason Leigh, and Jack Black star in *The Squid and the Whale* writer/director Noah Baumbach's squim-inducing comedy about a brittle, judgmental author whose brutal, razor-tongued remarks about his estranged sister's fiancé threaten to undermine her marriage plans.

MILAREPA: MAGICIAN, MURDERER, SAINT

Girman Lodro and Jamyang Lodro star in Negen Chokling's visually lush account of the 11th-century wanderer whose desire to exact vengeance on his uncle soon turns into a quest for enlightenment that eventually turns him into Tibet's greatest saint. In Ti-

betan with English subtitles. *Metro Cinema*: Dec 14-19 (Fri. Sun, Wed at 7pm; Sat, Mon, Tue at 9pm)

OUR DAILY BREAD

Director Nikolaus Geyhalter's fascinating, wordless documentary takes viewers on a tour of the surreal, disturbingly efficient world that is the high-tech European food industry, from vegetable farms to slaughterhouses. *Metro Cinema*: Dec 14, 16-17, 19 (Fri, Sun, Wed at 9pm; Mon at 7pm)

THE RED BALLOON/WHITE MANE

Newly restored prints of two beloved children's short films from the 1950s by director Albert Lamorisse: one about a Parisian boy who befriends a stray balloon that seems to have a mind of its own; and the other about a young fisherman's efforts to save a magnificent wild stallion from the wrangler who wants to "break" it. *Metro Cinema*: Dec 15-16, 18 (Sat and Tue at 7pm; Sun at 4:30pm)

ALSO PLAYING

AMERICAN GANGSTER

Ridley Scott tries to combine *Heat*, *Scarface*, and *Serpico* into an epic tale of the '70s Harlem heroin trade, but he winds up with something closer to Johnny Depp's *Blow*—solemn, portentous, and overly sentimental about its main character.

★★★★☆

AUGUST RUSH

Not the latest deodorant scent from Right Guard, but a syrupy, coincidence-laden melodrama about a young musical prodigy determined to track down his long-lost parents through the sheer power of music. Warm-hearted but soft-headed. Warning: contains Robin Williams.

★★★★☆

AWAKE

Essentially an *Afterschool Special* with a macabre twist, *Awake* fails on every critical count: acting, screenwriting, plot, pacing. And yet the damn thing somehow musters some hackneyed B-movie charm despite itself.

★★★★☆

BEE MOVIE

Jerry Seinfeld seems to have put more passion into the publicity campaign for this utterly generic cartoon than the lazy, underwritten script or the cereal-commercial visuals. A black-and-yellow symbol of everything wrong with contemporary Hollywood.

★★★☆☆

BEFORE THE DEVIL KNOWS YOU'RE DEAD

A spectacularly effective, nerve-jangling little crime picture starring Philip Seymour Hoffman and Ethan Hawke whose plan to rob their parents' jewelry store turns out to be an even worse idea than it sounds. Sidney Lumet may be 83, but he feels like the

youngest director in Hollywood.

★★★★☆

BEOWULF

The future of filmmaking? Hardly—unless every movie in the future is going to be an airless, clunky adventure performed by digitized figures who look like videogame characters stuck in pause mode.

★★★☆☆

CHRISTMAS IN WONDERLAND

The peerless comic timing of Carmen Electra and Patrick Swayze meets the heartwarming traditional seasonal setting of West Edmonton Mall. Merry Christmas, everyone!

★★★☆☆

THE DARJEELING LIMITED

Wes Anderson's up to his old tricks (meticulously designed sets and costumes, man-children with father issues, scenes that lapse into slow-motion whenever the British Invasion songs play on the soundtrack) as well as a few new ones—the wide-open Indian landscape in particular has loosened up his visual style. A charmer.

★★★★☆

ENCHANTED

It's not as clever as it could have been, and its occasional nods toward feminism are a joke, but Amy Adams' pitch-perfect performance as an animated princess stranded in real-life New York City transforms this mate-

rial into one of the more satisfying comedies of the season.

★★★★☆

FRED CLAUSS

Wow—Vince Vaughn turned into Tim Allen so gradually we barely even noticed it.

★★★☆☆

THE GOLDEN COMPASS

That \$180 million budget bought a beautiful-looking movie, but this adaptation of the first volume of Philip Pullman's beloved *His Dark Materials* trilogy softens and second-guesses everything that made the source material so memorable. Maybe, like the Harry Potter franchise, the sequels will be better?

★★★☆☆

HITMAN

Shitman.

★★★☆☆

INTO THE WILD

It ends with its hero starving to death in the Alaskan wilderness, and yet *Into the Wild* is still the most upbeat film Sean Penn has ever made. Credit goes to Emile Hirsch's winning performance as nature-loving thrill-seeker Chris McCandless, and to Penn's ecstatic yet skeptical embrace of his idealistic worldview.

★★★★☆

NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN

A near-perfect Brundlefly merging of the Coen Brothers' mordant, blackly comic sensibility and Cormac McCarthy's apocalyptic, near-Biblical evocation of evil on the loose on the Texas plains. Javier Bardem's performance as a malevolent bounty hunter will haunt your dreams.

★★★★☆

REDACTED

Brian De Palma makes a welcome return to political filmmaking with this kaleidoscopic fictionalization of a real-life atrocity committed by U.S. troops in Iraq. Or maybe not-so-welcome: many critics have found it strident and amateurish. They're not wrong, but De Palma's passion and visual inventiveness make for compelling viewing.

★★★★☆

STEPHEN KING'S THE MIST

Frank Darabont, the man who gave us *The Shawshank Redemption* and *The Green Mile*, finally adapts a Stephen King story that isn't set in a 1930s prison, but a modern-day supermarket besieged by oogum-boogum monsters. The character interactions are spot-on, but Darabont fails to capture the original novella's pervasive sense of unease.

★★★★☆

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The In-Law You Love to Hate | Nicole Kidman in Margot at the Wedding. PHOTO SUPPLIED

THIS WEEK: THE UNBELIEVABLY HATEFUL CHARACTERS OF MARGOT AT THE WEDDING

Jim Emerson, *Scanners* | "If I'm making the film sound detestable, maybe that's the best way I know of to express my admiration for it, and the way it keeps relentlessly covering the same ground (the characters' lousy psychic naves) while still managing to top itself, scene after scene. Every performance in the film is terrifically good/awful. I think there's some kind of exorbitant analytical

and observational genius in this home-horror-movie about cretinous, semi-articulate dunces. But when it was over, the same thought popped into my head that did at the end of Todd Solondz's outlandishly scumful *Palindromes*: Who's going to want to expose themselves to this gory dissection of these coldblooded creeps? Makes you want to see a good George Romero zombie movie. At least the Living Dead have real, uncalculated emotions."

Stephanie Zacharek, *Salon* | "It's bad enough that the movie is about uninteresting people's problems. What's worse is that it's about snobs, and Baumbach buys into their

snobbery. All that's missing is train tracks on the Zellers' property to tell us that the clan next door is from the wrong side of them. That family is called 'the Voglers'; the Zellers utter the name in the same tones you might use to speak of, say, the Cossacks. The Zellers' inability to comprehend that the Voglers are people too is perhaps meant to be funny, a joke on them. But the Voglers are presented as morons with no manners—they wind up being the movie's way of reassuring us that rich people may be messed up, but the unwashed masses aren't what they're cracked up to be. Either. The attitude is superior at best and cheap and stupid at worst."

Kristi Mitsuda, *Stop Smiling* | "Many have expressed contempt for the characters, and by extension, the film itself. Most of this reprobation is reserved for Margot, and it isn't difficult to see why. But the dismissive critical disdain wrong-headedly circles around the facile question of the character's likeability. The pretentious father and son of *The Squid and the Whale* were applauded as fully formed characterizations, but Margot meets with vituperative scorn. Could it be that female characters need to make nice to garner sympathy? At base, Baumbach wants to wring humanity out and lovingly hang it on the line to dry, and with the caustic, beautiful Margot at the Wedding, he does just that."

Scotiabank Theatre Edmonton

with IMAX

SHOWTIMES DECEMBER 14-20, 2007

GARNEAU		THE GOLDEN COMPASS		AMERICAN GANGSTER		CLAREVIEW 10 CINEMAS		CINEMA CITY MOVIES 12	
8712-109 STREET • 433-0778		Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30 Violence, not recommended for young children		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		4211-12TH AVENUE • 472-7000		130-10TH AVE • 472-7077	
INTO THE WILD		WETAKEWIKI CINEMA 4 PLEX		REX MOVIE		THE GOLDEN COMPASS		THIS CHRISTMAS	
Highly 4:45, 9:30, Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15	
PRINCESS		I AM LEGEND		DAN IN REAL LIFE		NITRAN		30 DAYS OF NIGHT	
Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15	
MARGOT AT THE WEDDING		ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS		METROPOLITAN OPERA: ROMEO ET JULIETTE		THE GOLDEN COMPASS		LOOKS FOR LAMBS	
Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15	
THE DAREDEVIL LIMITED		AUGUST RUSH		WWE ARMAGEDDON 2007		FRED CLAUS		30 DAYS OF NIGHT	
Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15	
BEFORE THE DEVIL KNOWS YOU'RE DEAD		NEW WEST MALL 8		NORTH EDMONTON CINEMAS		ACROSS THE UNIVERSE		THE HEARTBEAT KID	
Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		1421-13TH AVENUE • 733-2723		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15	
PARKLAND CINEMA 7		THIS CHRISTMAS		ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS		REX MOVIE		ENCOUNTERED	
Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15	
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS		I AM LEGEND		THE GOLDEN COMPASS		BEOWULF		THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM	
Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15	
ACROSS THE UNIVERSE		THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM		AWAKE		CHRISTMAS IN WONDERLAND		THE MIST	
Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15	
THE GOLDEN COMPASS		STARDUST		THE MIST		ENCOUNTERED		ENCOUNTERED	
Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15	
ENCHANTED		SOUTH EDMONTON		AUGUST RUSH		SCOTIABANK THEATRE		PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: JIMMY WORLD'S END	
Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Highly 7:05, 9:30, Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Highly 7:05, 9:30, Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30	
REX MOVIE		ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS		AMERICAN GANGSTER		ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS		THE GOLDEN COMPASS	
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AUGUST RUSH		ACROSS THE UNIVERSE		CITY CENTRE 9 CINEMAS		THE GOLDEN COMPASS		THE GOLDEN COMPASS	
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AWAKE		THE GOLDEN COMPASS		THE GOLDEN COMPASS		THE GOLDEN COMPASS		THE GOLDEN COMPASS	
Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Highly 7:05, 9:30; moderate Sat 8 Sun 1:05, 3:30		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15		Fri-Sat: Mon-Thurs 1:20, 4:45, 8:30, Sun 3:20, 9:15	
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AWAKE		THE GOLDEN COMPASS		THE GOLDEN COMPASS		THE GOLDEN COMPASS		THE GOLDEN COMPASS	
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THEATRE • EDMONTON VS. CALGARY • BY PAUL MATWYCHUK (2,514 words)

No Plays Like Home?

April was a busy month for Eugene Stickland this year. On April 19, he was at Theatre Network in Edmonton for the opening night performance of his play *Closer and Closer Apart*, and the very next night he was back in his hometown of Calgary for the opening night of Alberta Theatre Projects' remount of his 1996 hit *Sitting in Paradise*. The Calgary production took place in the opulent Martha Cohen Theatre, the jewel of Calgary's theatre district, which made a striking contrast to the previous night's party at Edmonton's comparatively cramped but much funkier Roxy Theatre. As Stickland likes to put it, "Seeing a play in Edmonton is like seeing a play with my friends. Seeing a play in Calgary is like seeing a play with my friends' parents."

As he circulated around the lobby after the play was over, glass of wine in hand, absorbing compliments from various audience members, Stickland witnessed a most unusual sight: Calgaryans with an inferiority complex.

"People would ask me what I've been doing," Stickland says, "and I'd say, 'Well, I just drove back from Edmonton—I had a play open there just last night.' And I'll tell you: I got the same response again and again: 'Oooh! A play in Edmonton! That must be a much more satisfying experience. After all, Edmonton's a much more cultured city than Calgary.' Now, *Closer* was a new play, so the Edmonton production probably did mean more to me, but I was amazed to see how many Calgaryans have this perception that there's so much more going on in Edmonton than there is here."

Soon after that night, Stickland ran into Jackie Flanagan, the editor of *Alberta Views*, and told her

Alberta Views' December issue, and it's already the talk of Edmonton's bustling theatre scene. (But apparently not as bustling as Calgary's!) Calgary a better theatre town than Edmonton? The article's very premise takes aim at one of the most cherished aspects of Edmonton's self-image—that while Calgary might be the seat of the province's financial power, Edmonton was the keeper of Alberta's cultural soul. Here's where the people who cared about more than making a quick buck liked to congregate—land of the arts-friendly mayor, home of the Fringe, stomping grounds of Lemoine, Thiessen, Hagen, Craddock, Baker, Belke: Colossuses all! The idea that a city like Calgary could have the edge on us when it came to money and culture isn't so much laughable as it is unthinkable.

I've spent the last couple of days talking to several local theatre figures about Stickland's article. Some are amused ("Well, that's pretty cheeky of him, isn't it?" remarked one when I explained Stickland's premise), some are airily dismissive, others get downright defensive. But dig a little deeper, and you get the feeling that people are finding Stickland's article a little hard to shake off. There's a little nagging voice that Edmonton theatre people have started hearing in the back of their heads this month, and every time they pass by a newsstand carrying *Alberta Views*, that voice is going to get a tiny bit louder and more insistent. Here's what that little voice is saying:

"What if he's right? What if he's right? What if he's right?"

Wake Up, Calgary!

The article, it should be said, is not a work of investigative journalism.



Opening Night in Edmonton | On April 19, Eugene Stickland watched *Closer and Closer Apart* premiere at Theatre Network. PHOTO BY IAN JACKSON

And Edmontonians can take some easy pride in mocking *Alberta Views*' decision to illustrate Calgary's superiority to Edmonton with a cover photo from Sage Theatre's upcoming Calgary production of John Cameron Mitchell's rock musical *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*—a show that played Edmonton more than four and a half years ago.

It should also be said that Stickland did not intend the article as a slam on Edmonton. After all, Edmonton productions of his plays—many of them at Theatre Network, including *A Guide to Mourning*, *All Clear*, *Excavations*, and *Midlife*—have long provided Stickland with a steady flow in income. "The pool of talent in Edmonton is incredible," he says. "Not just my theatre friends, but many of my best friends, period, are

theatre], but it's still not what this city's about in the minds of a large part of the population. New theatres are being built [The Vertigo Theatre Centre and Theatre Junction's new home, The Grand], money is being put into companies, great young artists are moving here from Edmonton and elsewhere, and the general public seems to be lagging behind. So part of what I was doing was saying, 'Wake up, Calgary! There's a lot of good stuff being done here, and it's as good as you'll find anywhere.'"

Nothing to get upset about there, right? "It ain't fightin' words," agrees Citadel artistic director Bob Baker. "The good news is that there's more theatre happening in Calgary, and that's terrific."

But Stickland sticks his neck out a little bit further than that in his article. Although he very carefully stops short of stating that Calgary is producing better plays than Edmonton, he does make the case that the general level of theatrical excitement is on the rise in Calgary, and that it's on the wane in Edmonton. He thinks Calgary theatre companies are doing more to encourage new work than theatre companies in Edmonton. He thinks that while the Fringe is an amazing, galvanizing event that Calgary has never been able to duplicate, it's stunted the overall development of Edmonton playwrighting. And he thinks the chronic lack of arts funding coupled with the shaky status of Workshop West, the company that

could always be counted on to do regular productions of new local plays, hasn't helped the city's mood either.

"When I started to talk to my friends in Edmonton," he says, "I got the feeling that people there were very demoralized. And I was surprised by that. If I've offended anyone, I'm sorry. But that's what I found."

Fleeing Edmonton

As the new artistic director of Workshop West, Michael Clark is heading a company whose precarious fortunes—they mounted no mainstage shows last season in hopes of getting their finances back in order—are widely seen as a barometer of the community's health in general. A former Edmontonian who moved back to town after spending seven years at Nakai Theatre in Whitehorse, Clark agrees that he's an anomaly. Most people he knows are emigrating in the opposite direction.

"The way the Tory government has mismanaged the boom to create inflation on unparalleled levels has led to a huge flight of talent," he says. "The best and brightest are moving out because it's no longer cheap to live here and rents are going through the roof. My favourite story involves [local actors] Jesse Gervais and Amber Borotsik. They were living above a drugstore on 82 Ave that had a rooftop patio which they turned into a garden paradise. But their lease ended, and the landlord raised their

"WHEN I STARTED TO TALK TO MY FRIENDS IN EDMONTON," EUGENE STICKLAND SAYS, "I GOT THE FEELING THAT THERE WERE VERY DEMORALIZED. AND I WAS SURPRISED BY THAT. IF I'VE OFFENDED ANYONE, I'M SORRY. BUT THAT'S WHAT I FOUND."

that same story. She'd always been after Stickland to write a piece for the magazine, and suggested that he use that incident as the springboard for an article. Which is what he proceeded to do.

The resulting piece, "Theatre Goes South: A Calgary Playwright Makes the Case for Crowning Cowtown Our Drama Capital," is the cover story of

Stickland himself would be the first to acknowledge that it's heavily anecdotal, and that he places much more emphasis on conversations with his theatre friends and a general, abstract, antennae-in-the-air impression of the prevailing mood than hard numbers and statistics about the number of new productions, audience size, or box-office grosses.

from Edmonton."

Actually, if he's giving anyone a kick in the pants, Stickland says, it's Calgary. "I think Calgary has a very vibrant arts culture compared to what it once had," he explains, "but there are still people who know diddley-squat about it. And it's frustrating, because there's a lot of great work being done [in Calgary

PLAYWRIGHT EUGENE STICKLAND SAYS THAT CALGARY HAS REPLACED EDMONTON AS ALBERTA'S DRAMA CAPITAL. COULD HE BE RIGHT?



Opening Night in Calgary [...] and then on April 20, he watched ATP's revival of *Sitting in Paradise* premiere in Calgary. PHOTO BY FRANK LEE

rent from something like \$600 or \$800 a month to \$2,000 a month. I could name 10 people who've left for similar reasons: Kerem Çetinel, Elyne Quan, Michael Cowie, Michael Scholer, Danny Arnold, Medina Hahn..."

Okay, okay, we believe you. But Clark parts company with Stickland, however, when he tries to paint Calgary as a hotbed of new play development compared to Edmonton. "That's bullshit!" he exclaims. "Could you say that about a town that has Theatre Network and Workshop West and Northern Light Theatre? Sure, Calgary has ATP [Alberta Theatre Projects], but there are at least four companies in Edmonton doing new work, plus a bunch of independent companies, plus the Fringe."

But Stickland points out that ATP isn't peanuts: over the last 35 years, they've produced 323 plays, 227 of them Canadian. For 20 years, they've also run the PlayRites festival, which premieres four new plays annually and workshops four more. (Stickland cites PlayRites as the reason he came to Calgary in the first place.) Plus, there's Lunchbox Theatre, which Stickland estimates has developed more than 200 new one-act plays. Sage Theatre's "Ignite" series encourages the creation of new work. Calgary's innovative One Yellow Rabbit troupe has always specialized in new play creation.

In Edmonton, meanwhile—as any young playwright can tell you—new

plays tend to face an uphill battle. (Unless, of course, your name is Eugene Stickland.) "I was watching a staged reading of *Waxworks* here in Calgary," says Stickland, referring to the script by Edmontonian playwright Trina Davies, which won the Alberta Playwriting Competition in 2007. "And what a good play it is! David Storch came out to direct it. And I found myself thinking, 'What's going to happen to that play when they go back to Edmonton?'" So far? Nothing.

Don Hannah, the award-winning New Brunswick playwright who spent two years in Edmonton as playwright-in-residence at the University of Alberta, was similarly taken aback by the lack of interest the city's theatre companies showed in promoting local theatre culture—especially given their vaunted reputation as a theatre hub. "I was surprised there weren't more new plays that weren't self-produced," he says. "What I call the midsize theatre companies just weren't doing a lot of new work, and very little of it by Edmontonians. I hate to hold up Toronto as a model because I'll just get shot for it, but in those old standby Toronto theatres—Tarragon and so forth—you do see a lot more new work."

And if I may add an anecdote of my own to Stickland's collection, I was talking to a respected Edmonton playwright recently and mentioned my own efforts to get my scripts produced by a local company. "Paul," the

playwright told me, "look outside the city. Don't even bother with Edmonton."

Victims of the Fringe

For Don Hannah, the dim prospects for new plays in Edmonton represent what he calls "the downside of the Fringe" in the wake of our blockbuster summer festival, anyone who's written a new play is now sort of expected to put it on themselves. "That's great when you're young," Hannah says, "but it's a pain in the neck when you're older."

And, Stickland asks, what kind of plays does the Fringe teach you how to write? Hour-long comedies, by and large—usually fairly broad, superficially "edgy," without much in the way of production values or inventive staging.

gaining the skills necessary to write more ambitious full-length, two-act plays—and, what's worse, Fringe audiences aren't gaining the skills to sit through them.

Bob Baker over at The Citadel disagrees, and points to someone like Chris Craddock, who's equally capable of writing frothy Fringe comedies like *Poptart* and more substantial mainstage plays like *Summer of My Amazing Luck*. But wasn't ambitious, unusual, experimental work supposed to be the bread and butter of the Fringe in the first place? It's hard to look at the typical Fringe lineup, crammed with standup comics, showtune cabarets, and new helpings of comfort food from familiar old faces, and not think that the Fringe has failed to live up to its promise.

"We need more playwrights' work to reach stages beyond the Fringe," says Ian Selman, chair of the drama department at the University of Alberta. "We'll calcify otherwise." Selman is encouraged by the existence of independent companies like the aerial troupe Firefly Theatre (whose *Duck Duck Bang* premiered a couple of months ago at Fringe Theatre Adventures) and Dammitdance (who staged a new version of *Soyte* earlier this season) as signs that the Fringe's spirit of innovation is invading the main season.

But Stickland, true to the Calgary spirit, thinks Edmonton needs to start thinking even bigger than supporting a couple of interesting indie projects. "I think the loss of the Phoenix Theatre was a real blow to Edmonton," he says. "I believe that theatre was about the same size as ATP. And if you can get a play produced in a house that size, that's a year's income. And that's a year in



Views to a Kill | The cover story that started the whole controversy. PHOTO SUPPLIED

Who knows?"

He doesn't think he's being ridiculous, either. "In Calgary," he says, "some of these oil companies may be run by fairly conservative people but they do understand the concept of research and development—they know that not every hole you drill in the ground gets results, and they support new plays on that principle. So you have commerce and art coming together in really interesting ways."

It's a little self-serving, admittedly, for a Calgary playwright to declare Calgary as the new hub of Alberta theatre—it's in the same tradition as that *Harper's* article where Tom Wolfe argued that American novelists should try to write more like Tom Wolfe. And you could say that Stickland is biting the hand that feeds him (or at least the hand that pays him his cut of the Theatre Network box office). And yes, if you were to say that it's very easy for the Calgary guy to say Edmonton theatre ought to be able to lay its hands on more corporate cash, you'd certainly have a point.

But listen to that little nagging voice in the back of your head as well. Because maybe he's right, maybe he's right, maybe he's right.

"IN CALGARY," STICKLAND SAYS, "SOME OF THESE OIL COMPANIES MAY BE RUN BY FAIRLY CONSERVATIVE PEOPLE, BUT THEY DO UNDERSTAND THE CONCEPT OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT—THEY KNOW THAT NOT EVERY HOLE YOU DRILL IN THE GROUND GETS RESULTS, AND THEY SUPPORT NEW PLAYS ON THAT PRINCIPLE."

"I think the feeling when the Fringe started was that it would help create a culture of theatre," he says, "audiences with a greater thirst for theatre who would then seek it out in the winter months. But what I heard from the artistic directors I spoke to was that just the opposite had happened." Stickland worries that Fringe-trained playwrights aren't

which to write your next play. I don't know—if something that size could come back to Edmonton, it would be so helpful to the whole community. Maybe the playwrights in Edmonton have to band together and form a co-op and start doing their own work. Maybe one of the big oil companies making a kajillion dollars in sales could support it for a couple of years.

"You always have two choices," Stickland says. "You can just be passive about it and say, 'Well, it's not happening, so I guess it's not happening.' Or you can be proactive and make it happen. And I don't think I've talked to anyone who talks that way in Edmonton. And I think there's a bit more of that proactive thinking down here in Calgary."

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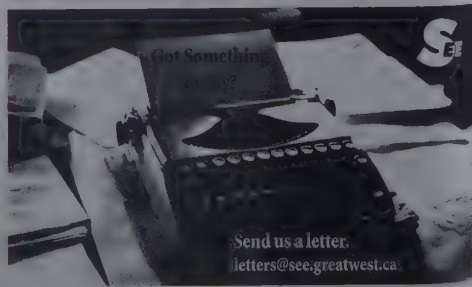
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Varley and Me

THE CURATOR OF A LANDMARK AGA EXHIBITION EXPLAINS WHY F.H. VARLEY DESERVES TO BE KNOWN AS CANADA'S GREATEST PORTRAIT PAINTER

F.H. VARLEY: PORTRAITS INTO THE LIGHT

By F.H. Varley. To Feb 17, Art Gallery of Alberta (100, 10230 Jasper Ave.). Info: www.artgalleryofalberta.com

If F.H. Varley's name is remembered today by the general public, it's because of his association with the Group of Seven. But ironically, if some of his most interesting and personal paintings remain unknown it's because of the same association.

As Katerina Atanassova, the curator of the Art Gallery of Alberta's new exhibition *F.H. Varley: Portraits Into the Light*, Varley's true passion was portraits, not landscapes—when the Group of Seven had their first exhibition, Varley contributed more portraits to the show than landscapes. "But you never hear about that!" she exclaims. "The Group of Seven had a different agenda, and portraits just didn't fit with that mandate."

Atanassova hopes *Portraits Into the Light*—the first large-scale exhibition devoted exclusively to Varley's portraits—will correct people's impression of this fascinating and still relevant figure in Canadian art history. "His paintings don't look historical," she says. "If you look at the other leading portrait artists of the time, you see that academic quality and go, 'Oh, that's an old painting.' But you look at a Varley portrait and it looks like the work of a contemporary artist."

SEE asked Atanassova to help us look at six of those portraits, and give some background information on each of them to prepare you for when you take in the exhibition as a whole—and in colour.



Portrait of Lieutenant G.B. McKean, V.C.
1919
Oil on canvas
102.3 x 76.7 cm
Canadian War Museum



Indian Summer
1914-1915
Oil on canvas
97.8 x 95.3 cm
Joyce Sowby



Alice Massey
c. 1924-1925
Oil on canvas
82.0 x 61.7 cm
National Gallery of Canada



Frame Job | Curator Katerina Atanassova prepares the F.H. Varley exhibition at the AGA. PHOTO BY JOHN ALAN

Indian Summer

"Varley knew what he wanted to do from the moment he arrived in Canada in 1912: he wanted to put the human figure in the landscape. This painting resulted from a trip he took to Algonquin Park in 1914 with Tom Thomson, A.Y. Jackson and Arthur Lismer. That famous archival photograph of them in Algonquin has been reproduced everywhere, but Varley was only there one single time. It's a good example of the misconceptions surrounding him, and you can see how this painting, with the person's figure in it, differs from other Group of Seven images."

Portrait of Lieutenant G.B. McKean, V.C.

"During World War I, Varley was commissioned to do portraits of soldiers who had been awarded the Victoria Cross. We have two of those portraits here, and they look like they were painted by two different artists. The one of Captain O'Kelly is very flat and traditional, with delicate brushstrokes, but this one is so bold and expressionistic. McKean suffered from shell-shock, and you can see the deep emotional turmoil in his face and Varley's bold brushstrokes. This is the essence of Varley as a portrait artist—for the rest of his career, if the sitter was emotionally open enough, he would respond to that. If they weren't, the painting would look more like the O'Kelly."

Alice Massey

"I find this portrait of Vincent Massey's wife Alice fascinating because it's done in this conventional format, and yet Varley breaks through that by introducing this bold palette of green and blue. It's impossible to tell whether the subject is supposed to be indoors or outdoors, there is no reference to furniture or Alice's social status—it has what critics like to call 'no narrative' around her. He's more interested in portraying her as a human being. And with the blending of the green and blue, you see Varley at his full strength here as a colourist."

Vera

"This is Vera Olivia Weatherbie, Varley's student, who he met in 1926 in British Columbia and with whom he had a subsequent affair that lasted until 1935. For a number of years, she was his primary model, and Varley credited her with starting him on a more spiritual path, and for changing his palette from the more settled reds and browns to these strong emeralds and purples. Varley claimed to see colour in every person he met, and to him, Vera was a 'green person'—green being the colour of spirituality."

Erica

"The 1940s is probably my favourite period of Varley's work—he met many strong women during this period, women who reminded him of the gypsies he painted earlier in his career, and who he'd always admired for their freedom and their ability to show strength in the face of hardship. It's a very sensual period in his work, and over and over, you get the 'split face,' half in light, half in shadow. Erica, the woman in this portrait, is still alive—she's 91, and she talks about Varley in a video interview I did with her that's part of the exhibition. Varley often gets portrayed as a womanizer, but that's not what he was."

Studio Door

"This is Kathleen McKay, who had read about Varley in Maclean's and decided to visit him in his studio and commission a portrait of her dying husband. And the story goes that when she arrived, the door to his studio was open and she sort of stood there in the doorway—and Varley, in his commanding voice, said, 'Hold it there!' He captured that moment in a sketch, which he eventually turned into this painting. He loved women with almond eyes, exotic features. McKay was definitely his type. And she became his muse and companion for the last 13 years of his life, until he died in 1969."



Vera
1930
Oil on canvas
61 x 50.6 cm
National Gallery of Canada



Erica
1942
Oil on canvas
28.2 x 37.1 cm
Trinity College



Studio Door
c. 1952-1953
Oil on canvas
101.6 x 76.5 cm
The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

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Latitude 53 (10248-106 St.)

"It's a chance to let the community know what we're capable of," says Heather Daam, president of the University of Alberta's Student Design Association, which will be using this weekend's *Newfangled Design* show at Latitude 53 as a showcase for their most recent work.

"As well," she continues, "it's a great way to see what other designers are up to. Design is a bit collaborative—you don't want to be stuck in a vacuum, you want to see what else is out there... Some of it is schoolwork, some of it is things that we've been doing in our spare time. It shows what we've been thinking about—it's exploring and playing, really."

Visual arts and industrial arts might seem to be too far apart to be natural collaborators, but Daam disagrees, pointing out that the faculty and the students make an effort to integrate design elements. "We like to share ideas," she says. "Besides, at the university we get a very strong basis on process and how to look beyond the design realm, becoming



Shaker Design Can a salt shaker be art? Sinan Maani might convince you it can't. PHOTO SUPPLIED

ing connectors between other disciplines and bringing different areas together."

graphic explorations as examples of the excellent work coming out of the U of A. "I'm looking at the intricacies

in particular is letterform in different typefaces screened on Plexiglas, so you can stack them on top of each

"IT'S A GREAT WAY TO SEE WHAT OTHER DESIGNERS ARE UP TO. DESIGN IS A BIT COLLABORATIVE—YOU DON'T WANT TO BE STUCK IN A VACUUM, YOU WANT TO SEE WHAT ELSE IS OUT THERE. IT'S EXPLORING AND PLAYING, REALLY."

Daam points to Andrea Leitner's elegant table, Sinan Maani's stylized saltshaker and Alaine Haynal's typographic

explorations as examples of the excellent work coming out of the U of A. "I'm looking at the intricacies

other to compare the intricacies of the form—it's an explorative thing." Haynal says she's most interested

in investigating the more expressive possibilities of letterform than just using it as a given. For her, the Student Design Association has been a great vehicle for bringing together design groups that are traditional, separate, attempting to get a dialogue going. "Both have a lot to contribute to each other," she says, "in terms of how we think."

This open-minded approach to collaboration has apparently worked wonders—last May the university's industrial design program was allowed to exhibit at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair in New York, making it the first Canadian design school ever to be accepted at the two-decade-old exhibition. Daam is pleased that Edmonton designers have made such impressive headway in such a competitive international field, but she's also quick to note that designers must constantly stay abreast of current trends, as well as keep their own work within the public view.

"I think that the market is changing," Daam says. "We keep seeing more and more exciting things on both the industrial design and graphic design levels. The boundaries keep getting pushed, and our role is partially to educate the public on these things—these new ideas are coming out, and the more that people see and experience them, the more comfortable they'll get with them."

REVIEW • CONVERGENCE AND CONGLOMERATES • BY ANGELA BRUNSCOTT | 680 words

It's the End Of The World As He Knows It

**JOURNALIST MARC EDGE
CASTS ASPER-SIONS ON THE
VAST, VILLAINOUS CANWEST
MEDIA EMPIRE**

ASPER NATION: CANADA'S MOST

DANGEROUS MEDIA COMPANY

By Marc Edge. New Star Books. 326 pp. \$21

With the media fixated on the trial of erstwhile Canadian media baron Conrad Black, media junkies here in Canada might want to turn their heads away and take a long and sober look at our own Asper family and the CanWest empire. Marc Edge, a former West Coast journalist, does just that in *Asper Nation: Canada's Most Dangerous Media Company*.

The book chronicles CanWest Global's rise and eventual domination of the Canadian media, taking time along the way to examine how the Asper family uses their media outlets to further their own political beliefs and promote their other business interests. Edge's background also includes a stint as a business reporter at the *Calgary Herald*, and that training is evident—in a bad way—in

his first three chapters, which follow Izzy Asper as he builds his television network, Global. In this rather dry section, Edge marshals evidence of CanWest's cost-cutting ways and their inevitably detrimental effect on the quality of their journalism. It's important information, but delivered in same heavy tone as the business pages.

Where *Asper Nation* really gets interesting is Edge's chapter on the influence of the media. He summarizes a number of studies showing how successful newspapers have been at setting the news agenda and framing the debate over national issues. Still, it's not until Edge details Izzy, David, and Leonard Asper's more arrogant actions that Edge's claim that CanWest is the "most dangerous media company in Canada" gets convincing.

"One of the problems with the Aspers is that they don't have a journalism background," says Edge over the phone from Texas, where he teaches journalism at Sam Houston University. "At least Rupert Murdoch and Conrad Black started in

the newspaper business and kind of understood a little bit about the ethics of journalism."

CanWest's most egregious transgression, according to Edge, took place in 2001, when the Aspers tried to dictate national editorials from their head office in Winnipeg to all their papers. Rubbing salt in the faces of local editors, the family also decreed that no rebuttal views could be aired in columns or letters to the editor. Later, the replacement of the word "insurgent" with "terrorist" in wire copy at the *National Post* and *Ottawa Citizen* drew attention to the Asper's headline pro-Israel stance.

But as naturally receptive as I am to Edge's criticisms of the Aspers, I'm a little on the fence when it comes to recommending his book. I certainly came away from it with a better understanding of the Canadian media landscape, and it contains important information for anyone concerned with freedom of the press.

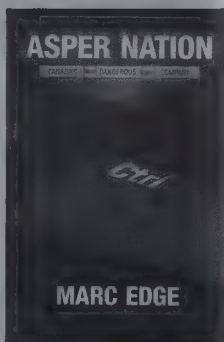
But at times the book's audience seems to be journalism students or those new to the industry. Media activists will be familiar with most of

this material, although some of the specific criticisms of the CRTC are enlightening. It's a little too dense for the casual reader.

Asper Nation's other failing is Edge's blanket dismissal of the impact of the Internet. For a generation not chained to network schedules for their daily dose of entertainment or to the local daily for their news, Edge seems a little behind the curve. "That would be your generation," he says with good humour. "But daily newspapers, I think, have a broader reach, especially with older people and tend to be much more influential politically."

Media owners like the Aspers have pointed to the Internet as evidence that the media landscape is actually less monolithic than their critics claim, and to justify their increasing control of our media. "But many studies have shown that the Internet does not add much to the local news coverage," Edge says. "While it has a great global reach, it doesn't do a lot of local news."

Ultimately, it's the telling bits of journalism lore which Edge scat-



An Exposed With Edge Izzy Asper has the lowdown on Izzy, David, and Leonard. PHOTO SUPPLIED

ters throughout his book that make it readable. Chief among these is that famously arrogant line that David Asper made during a speech in Oakville, Ontario after *Montreal Gazette* writers pulled their bylines from the newspaper in protest against the Asper's national editorials: "It was the end of the world as they knew it, and I felt fine."

EXHIBITS

ALLIED ARTS COUNCIL 455 KING ST., SPRUCE GROVE, 902-0664 Until DEC 22, annual Christmas gift and sale. Info: www.alliedartsCouncil.com

ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL 1006-106 ST., 488-6611 EXT. 271. Info: www.albertacraft.ca

THE ARTERY 555 ASPIER AVE. UNTIL JAN 4, "Towards Seeing Everything," photographic images by Ted Kerr. Hours: Tue & Thu 5-7 pm, or by appointment. Info: theartery.ca

ART GALLERY OF ALBERTA ENTERPRISE SQUARE, #102 1020 ASPIER AVE., 422-6223 UNTIL FEB 17 "F.H. Varley: Portals into the Light," an in-depth look at the portrait of Frederick Varley. Until JAN 6 "Fun House," new Canadian contemporary artists put artist convention to the outer-most limit. "The 1950 Ford Show," 100 artists present 100 drawings of a 1950 Ford from memory. Hours: Mon-Fri 10 am-5 pm, Thu & Sat 10 am-6 pm free admission. Sat & Sun 11 am-5 pm. Info: www.artgalleryofalberta.com

ARTS HUB STUDIO GALLERY 300 FL., 1027-106 ST., 492-9522 UNTIL JAN 11 "11040," works by Monica Pitre, Gillian Williams, Andrea Pinheiro, and guest artists. Hours: Thu 5-8 pm, or by appointment. Closed DEC 27. Info: www.artshub.com

BEARLAW GALLERY 10403-124 ST., 482-1024. Info: bearlawgallery.com

BLUE CURVE GALLERY 612 GLENVIEW REHABILITATION HOSPITAL, 1020-111 AVE. UNTIL JAN 12, "The Canadian Connection," recent prints and paintings by Gordon Syder. "The United Nations of Prints," encaustic paintings by Marlene Wyman. Hours: Daily 3-6 pm

CENTRE D'ARTS VISUELS DE CALVERTA 9103-95 AVE., 461-3427 UNTIL DEC 22 "Minutemen and More," group of miniature paintings. Christmas crafts, and workshops by Judith Kibak. Info: www.collective.ca

CHRIST BERGSTROM'S RED GALLERY 9631-87 AVE., 438-0202 UNTIL DEC 31, Edmonton artists at Red on Why from the collection of Christ Bergstrom and David Murray. Hours: Mon-Fri 11 am-5 pm

DOUGLAS UEL GALLERY 10324-124 ST., 488-4445 UNTIL DEC 27, Christmas show. Opening reception DEC 15, 2-4 pm. Hours: Tue-Fri 9:30 am-3:30 pm. Info: douglaugelgallery.com

ELECTRUM DESIGN STUDIO 12419 STORY PLAIN RD., 482-1402 Collection 2007. Jewelry and ornaments by Wayne Mackenzie, Janet Smith, Meghan May, John Blair & Jackie Anderson, paintings by Sophia Podnyuh-Shah, Jeff Collins, woodwork by John Morel, Henry Schlosser, George Hoagie, glasswork by Robert Held, Jeff Holmwood, Todd Salomonchik, ceramics by Katrina Chaytor, Christian Ben, Enzen Kefield, wash-dry by Elyse Terry O'Connor, photography by Lori Ann Muir. Info: www.waynemackenziegallery.com

EXTENSION CENTRE GALLERY 2ND FL., U OF A EXTENSION, 100-12 ST., 427-1805 UNTIL DEC 4 pm. Info: www.extension.ca

FAB GALLERY 1-FINE ARTS BUILDING, U OF A CAMPUS 102 IS "Somewhere in Between" by Scott Cumberland. MFA Painting: The 2005 Alumni Awards for Excellence in Book Design in Canada. Hours: Tues-Fri 10 am-5 pm, Sat 2-5 pm

FRINGE GALLERY 10516 WHYTE AVE., 428-0240 Throughout DEC Gallery closed for maintenance. Info: www.paintspool.ca

FRONT GALLERY 1232 ASPIER AVE., 488-2952 UNTIL JAN 12 UNTIL JAN 12, "Origins," group show by recent U of A BFA graduates

HARDCOURT HOUSE GALLERY 3RD FL., 10275-112 ST., 426-4180 UNTIL DEC 22 "The New Alchemists," sculpture by Blair Brennan and Catherine Burgess. Info: www.harcourtthouse.ab.ca

JEFF ALLEN GALLERY STRATHKONA SENIORS CENTRE, 10831 UNIVERSITY AVE., 433-8807 UNTIL JAN 2, Christmas show and sale. Hours: Mon-Thurs 9 am-4 pm

JOHNSON GALLERY 771-85 ST., 465-6171 Edmonton Oil Painters, artists working in-studio throughout the season. Artists featured include Susan Alma, Susan Ben, Shari Honey, David Brooks, Margaret Klugestein, Tracy Martine, Anne McCormick, and Cindy Bevel. Info: www.susanalma.com

LAND GALLERY 1130-105 AVE., 990-1181 Hours: Mon-Fri 10 am-5:30 pm, Sat 10 am-4:30 pm. Info: www.landgallery.com

LATITUDE 53 10248-106 ST., 423-5353 DEC 13-15 "Newfangled," the U of A Student Design Association group show. Hours: Tue-Fri 10 am-6 pm, Sat 12-5 pm. Info: www.latitude53.org

LOFT GALLERY A.I. OTTEWELL CENTRE, 590 BROADMOOR BLVD., SHERWOOD PARK, 467-4481 UNTIL JAN 5, affordable art for Christmas, suitable for home, office, or gifts. Includes fine works by Deanna Corrigan, Christine Allard, Kaye Acker, John Beaman, Margaret Klugestein, Tracy Martine, Anne McCormick, and Cindy Bevel. Info: www.susanalma.com

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MCJULLEN GALLERY 6440-112 ST., U OF A HOSPITAL, 407-7157 Hours: Mon-Fri 10 am-8 pm, Sat-Sun noon-6 pm. Admission free

MULTICULTURAL CENTRE PUBLIC ART GALLERY 5411-51 ST., STONY PLAIN Hours: daily 10 am-4 pm

NINA HAGGERTY CENTRE 9704-111 AVE., 474-7671 UNTIL

DEC 31 "Under the Influence," artists with disabilities present unique interpretations of people who inspire and influence their daily lives. Studio hours: Mon-Fri 10 am-7 pm. Gallery hours: Mon, Wed & Fri 9:30 am-7:30 pm, Tue & Thu 9:30 am-4 pm & 6-8 pm. Info: www.ninahaggertyart.ca

OUT OF THE FIRE STUDIO 1224 ASPIER AVE., 438-0240 UNTIL DEC 31 "Merging Spirits," stone, metal, and wire sculptures by Sherrita Ash. Ongoing displays include Zimbabwean stone sculpture, paintings by Alberta artists. Romanian blown glass sculpture by Iva Tomasiu, glass jewelry by Braden Hammond, and stoneware pottery by Irene Outofthefirestudio.com

PETER ROBERTSON GALLERY 10183-112 ST. UNTIL JAN 5, "Fireworks: Silver and Steel" sculptures by Lisa Burns and Karen Canine. Hours: Tue-Sat 10 am-5:30 pm. Info: www.peterrobertsongallery.com

PETER ROBERTSON GALLERY 12304 ASPIER AVE., 455-4279 UNTIL JAN 5, group show featuring Alice Eckert, Phil Darrab, Peter von Tessenhausen, David Janzen, David Canine, Linda Lindemann, Jonathan Ferret, David Alexander. Hours: Tue-Sat 10 am-5:30 pm. Info: www.peterrobertsongallery.com

PICTURE THIS 959 ORZLER ST., SHERWOOD PARK UNTIL DEC 15, group show featuring original oils by Audrey Pfannenmiller watercolours by Gregg Johnson. Artist landscapes by Ben Will Brown, Western Canadian landscapes by Roger H. Arndt, peace scenes by John Ennsen, watercolours and oils by Brent Highten, acrylics by Murray Phillips, and Brazilian soapstone sculptures by Nancy Theodor. Hours: Daily 9 am-5:30 pm. Info: www.picturethisgallery.com

PLANTZ DESIGN CENTRE 10025-80 AVE., 478-2459 Ongoing displays include functional sculpture and jewelry by Sandra Sing Fernandez, metal sculpture by Linda Maries and Bianca Khan, and paintings by Quentin Maki and Tim Rehm. Info: www.plantzdesign.com

PORTAL GALLERY 9414-91 ST., 702-7527 UNTIL DEC 31 "Medley Fields" by Giselle Denis. Hours: Tue-Fri 12-8 pm, Sat 12-7 pm

PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY 19 PIERSON ST., ALBERTA, 460-4310 UNTIL DEC 22 "Guided," works by artists from St. Albert Visual Arts Council and St. Albert's five art guilds

ROYAL ARCHIVES OF ALBERTA 2555 ROPEP RD., 427-1750 Hours: Tues-Sat 9 am-10:30 pm, Wed 9 am-9 pm. Info: www.rta.ab.ca

ROWLES & CO. LTD. MEZZANINE LEVEL 1030-103 ST., 426-4035 Info: www.rowles.ca

SCOTT GALLERY 10411-124 ST., 488-9819 UNTIL DEC 22 "Christmas Treasures," textile based landscapes by Martha Cole and fold-out panoramic watercolor landscapes by Robert Simla. Hours: Tues-Sat 10 am-5 pm. Info: www.scottgallery.com

SCULPTURE STUDIO & GALLERY SHERWOOD PARK, 662-4160 Figurative and abstract sculpture by Horst B. Info: www.horst-sculptures.ca

SELFRIEDGE POTTERY STUDIO 9844-48 AVE., 439-3996 Hours: 11 am-5 pm. Info: www.selfridgepottery.com

SNAP GALLERY SOCIETY OF NORTHERN ALBERTA PRINT ARTISTS 10309-97 ST., 423-4490 Hours: Tues-Sat noon-5 pm. Info: snapgalleryartists.com

STRATHONA COUNTY MUSEUM & ARCHIVES 9151 5TH ST., SHERWOOD PARK, 476-9189 Hours: Mon-Fri 10 am-4 pm. Info: www.strathonacountymuseum.ca

STUDIO GALLERY 1 PIERSON ST., ST. ALBERT, 460-5993 Hours: Tues-Fri 10 am-5 pm, Sat 10 am-4 pm

TELLUS WORLD OF SCIENCE 1071-142 ST., 453-3444 Pema-

rent Exhibits include The Body Fantastic, Mystery Avenue, The Green's House, Space Place, Discoveryland, and Discoveries. The Explorer Gallery, Synapse Science Stage features Science Demos, Cryogenics, Electricity and What Puts The Fizz in Soda Pop! Info: 453-3344. www.odysseum.com

TU GALLERY 10718-124 ST., 422-9662 Info: www.tugallery.ca

URBAN ROOTS 10418-82 AVE., 438-7978

VAAGA GALLERY VISUAL ARTS ASSOCIATION 310 FL., 10275-112 ST., 427-1731 UNTIL DEC 22 "Passages," photography by Leona Chapman and metal sculpture by Audra Scholtz. Hours: Mon-Fri 10-4 pm, Sat 12-4 pm

WEST HOLE GALLERY 12018 ASPIER AVE., 488-4392 Hours: Tue-Sat 10 am-5 pm. Info: www.westholegallery.com

WORKS GALLERY 10200, 10225-101 AVE., 426-7122 Hours: Mon-Fri 12-5 pm. Info: www.theworks.ab.ca

ZIEGLER HUGHES GALLERY & SERENDIPITY FRAMING 9660-90 AVE., 433-0888 Anahualcali Mexican jewelry & art works by Canadian and Mexican artists and artisans. Hours: Tue & Wed 10 am-5 pm, Thu & Fri 10 am-8 pm, Sat noon-8 pm. Sun & Mon noon-5 pm

ZOCALO 103075-95 ST., 428-0754 International crafts, artwork, and tropical flowers. Mon-Wed & Fri 10-6 pm, Thu 10-9 pm, Sat 9-5 pm, Sun 12-5 pm

MUSEUMS

ALBERTA AVIATION MUSEUM 11410 KINGSWAY AVE., 451-1175 Edmonton busload display in WWII-era double-wide, double-long hangar. Hours: Daily 10 am-4 pm

CANADIAN PETROLEUM DISCOVERY CENTRE 10275-112 ST., 427-1731 UNTIL DEC 22 "Passages," photography by Leona Chapman and metal sculpture by Audra Scholtz. Hours: Mon-Fri 10-4 pm, Sat 12-4 pm

DISCOVERY MUSEUM 10275-112 ST., 427-1731 UNTIL DEC 22 "Passages," photography by Leona Chapman and metal sculpture by Audra Scholtz. Hours: Mon-Fri 10-4 pm, Sat 12-4 pm

EDMONTON MUSEUM 10100-101 AVE., 462-1000 Hours: Daily 10 am-5 pm

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RODA DE CAPOEIRA SATURDAYS, 1-2 PM CAPOEIRA ACADEMY, 10540 ASPIER AVE., 709-9600 A live performance of Capoeira, a Brazilian mix of dance, martial arts and music, invented by African slaves. Info: www.capoeiraedmonton.ca

SANTA'S KIDZ DEC 15, 3 PM MYER HORTONVILLE THEATRE, 510 OF A CAMPUS Third Street Band joins local hip hop crews and dance studios for the annual holiday benefit show, proceeds benefit the Make A Wish Foundation and the Bisset Centre. Tickets \$22, \$75 youth 12 and under, at TM. Info: www.santaskidz.ca

THEATRE

THE CHRISTMAS CAROL PROJECT DEC 14-22, 8 PM. ROCKY THEATRE, 10208-124 ST. A musical version of Dickens' A Christmas Carol. Featuring Bill Boume, Terry Morrison, and Kenneth Brown. Presented by Brass Musical Productions. Dec 16 matinee 2 pm, no show. Dec 17 & 18 Tickets \$30 advance, \$11, \$35 at the door

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE DEC 10-22, 7 PM. VARSONA THEATRE, 10209-83 AVE. Tentaia Juvenalia presents a live radio version of Frank Capra's film classic, featuring Leona Brausen, Jeff Hoffman, Davina Steiner, Ron Pedersen, and more. Tickets \$25 advance, \$33-399

LANGUAGE & CONTENT LAST MON EVERY MONTH 8 PM. JERILL A HYDE RD 10100-100 AVE. Image Theatre's monthly series presents readings of new and undiscovered plays. Food and drink service available. Admission a PWC suggested donation \$5. Info: Ryan, 971-3675. www.imagetheatre.com

OH SUSANNA CHRISTMAS SPECIAL DEC 12, 11 PM. VARSONA THEATRE, 10209-83 AVE. A seasonal salute to the ballet, guided by the enchanting Elvira Susanna Potchuk. Special guests include Darrin Hagen and a cappella trio

PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF ALBERTA 2555 ROPEP RD., 427-1750 Hours: Tues-Sat 9 am-10:30 pm, Wed 9 am-9 pm. Info: www.rta.ab.ca

ROYAL ALBERTA MUSEUM 10245-101 AVE., 453-1900 Permanent exhibits include "Wild Alberta" exploring Alberta's natural habitat. Synchro Gallery #1 Aboriginal Culture. The Natural History Gallery, examining historic geographical changes in Alberta. Hours: Mon-Sun 9 am-5 pm. Info: www.royalalbertamuseum.ca

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Asari Info: www.vancouvertheatre.com/chusama

RAPID FIRE THEATRE 10209-83 AVE., 448-0605 Theatresports Fridays, Chimpz Saturdays, \$10 at the door. Info: www.rapidfiretheatre.com

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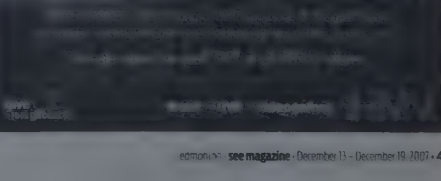
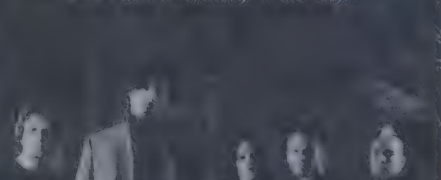
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than just Money Honey



A Little Story About Roommate A, Roommate B, GF, and OG



SAVAGE LOVE: DAN SAVAGE

YOU MAY NEED SOME SCRATCH PAPER IN ORDER TO DIAGRAM THE SITUATION IN DAN'S FIRST LETTER THIS WEEK

My two roommates are in the same frat. Roommate A and his GF have been going out for about a year. Roommate A is a great guy, but maybe a bit too nice: Recently, his GF cheated on him and he forgave her. Her infidelity did not come as a surprise to the rest of us. When she's drunk, she acts inappropriately. She gets touchy and says suggestive things—it's way beyond friendly flirting.

Anyway, Roommate B came into my room the other night and confessed that, a week or so before Roommate A's GF cheated on him, she propositioned another member of his fraternity—let's

call him OG (Other Guy)—while Roommate A was away. Before she started going out with Roommate A, GF and OG fucked. So she ran into OG that night and flat-out told OG that she wanted to fuck him. OG refused, to his credit, and relayed the story to Roommate B, but swore him to secrecy.

Is it my place to tell Roommate A about his GF's behaviour? I don't know OG well enough to tell him to tell Roommate A, and Roommate B won't tell Roommate A. Everyone agrees that it's a fucked-up situation. I mean, no one really knows how many times GF has fucked around on my roommate. What's your take?

Friend Really Over Strumpet's Treachery

All you've got, FROST, is hearsay—what Roommate B told you about what OG told him about Roommate A's GF—and hearsay isn't admissible in court. But this isn't a trial, it's a friendship, and sometimes friendship requires us to pass along hearsay and/or highly credible gossip.

What's that lovely saying that

sometimes drops from the oh-so-fuckable mouths of fratboys? Oh, yes: Bros before hos. Usually I find that phrase offensive and misogynistic. FROST, but in this instance it applies.

Tell Roommate A what you know. If his GF is making passes at everything on campus with a cock, Roommate A has a right to know for the sake of his own health and safety. His GF also needs to learn a valuable lesson: She's got to set up her cheatin' game—fuck people outside of her boyfriend's social circle, for starters—if she intends to cheat on all the men she's with over the course of her life. Getting her ass dumped for sloppy technique in college will help her get her cheating act together by the time she marries some poor bastard.

And finally, FROST, there's a chance—an outside one—that Roommate A already knows and doesn't care, either because he and GF have an open relationship or he's turned on by his girlfriend "cheating" on him. If Roommate A doesn't dump his GF after you break the news, FROST, you're not obligated to inform him about any other trouble

his GF gets into. Rest assured, she's telling him all about it while he fucks her senseless.

I'm in my mid-20s and recently started sleeping with a coworker who is in his late 40s. The sex is incredibly hot, but last time I spontaneously called him "Daddy," and then he started in with "You've been a very bad girl" stuff—and it really turned us on. Afterward, we were a little freaked by the idea that we were basically evoking the image of a father abusing his daughter. Is this as creepy as it seems?

Phreaked In Phoenix

The power imbalance built into an affair with a much older coworker weighed on both your minds until—ta-da!—out popped daddy/girl stuff while you were fucking. So do you want to fuck your actual dad now, PIP? Does he want to fuck his actual daughters, if he has any? If the answer to both these questions is "no," then this isn't a problem. Remember, PIP. He's not your daddy; he's a daddy.

For four years I've been dating a gal who is freaking amazing in almost every way. The other 10 per cent of the time she's the worst human I've ever met: super-violent, super-dishonest. (She tells our friends that I beat her to cover up for her violence toward me!) I've tried communicating, but she gets angry if I try to talk about it. I know I can either accept it or break up with her, but I was hoping you'd have a better answer. Any ideas? She's far superior to most humans I've met in every other regard and I want to spend the rest of my life with her.

Sick Of Getting Beaten Up

Break up with her now, SOGBU. Or, fuck, spend the rest of your life with this monster if she's that wonderful—fucking—but go in with both (black) eyes open. Being with her means being abused. You would be a fool to stay with her, under the circumstances. But it's your call, fool.

Oh, and a woman who will tell your friends that you beat her will one day tell the same lie to the police, SOGBU. Just so you know.

A while back, I discovered my fiancé was having an affair, so we

broke up. Maybe I should have laid down specific ground rules when we got back together, but I still felt betrayed when I found out that he was in regular contact with the Other Woman. I avoid social gatherings that I know the Other Woman will be at, but my fiancé goes without me. He knows I hate it, but he guilties me about not trusting him. I've even seen her name in his e-mail inbox. I wasn't deliberately spying—wshare the same computer.) Am I wrong to feel insecure or is my fiancé being insensitive?

Going On Paranoid

Your fiancé cheated, GOP, so the onus is on him to avoid, within reason, doing things that make you feel insecure. Hanging out with the OW, e-mailing the OW, chatting with the OW at parties—he shouldn't be doing any of that crap out of simple consideration for your feelings. If you're going to marry him, you have to forgive him and trust him. But he has to avoid doing things that give you more cause to mistrust him than he's given you already.

And, finally, he has the nerve to guilt you? He sounds like a manipulative, selfish jerk, GOP—which are the warning signs of a habitual, serial cheater. Are you sure you wanna marry this douche?

Your recent columns about men, women, weight, attraction, and honesty were incredible. As a strong feminist, I know women overwhelmingly bear the brunt of sexism in our society, but I feel that the ways that sexism affects men, and how this code is maintained by social relationships between other men as well as women, are often marginalized. Sexism affects us all in some way and this week's column did a nail-on-the-head job showcasing how all men are negatively affected by sexist patterns. Understanding and accounting for gendered interactions between all people helps undermine patriarchy because the roles we as a society impose on one of the two hegemonic sexes are diametrically opposed in the other. Great job.

Feminism Is Great Healthy Thought

I don't know what the fuck you're talking about, FIGHT, but thanks for sharing. For more letters about men, women, weight, attraction, and honesty go to www.thestranger.com/savage/honesty.

Download Savage Lovecast (my weekly podcast) every Tuesday at www.thestranger.com/tian12 mail at savage@love.net

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Sex Advice From Nancy Drew?



MY MESSY BEDROOM. JOSEY VOGELS WHO WOULD HAVE IMAGINED THAT THE VIRGINAL TEEN SLEUTH WAS SUCH A FONT OF WISDOM REGARDING RELATIONSHIPS?

I could never figure out why we have to be naughty or nice at Christmas. Why can't we be both? To that end, here are a few book selections for everyone on your list: the naughty, the nice, the single, the divorced, the Nancy Drew fans, the wankers, and the people just looking for a three-some.

Real Life Romance: Everyday Wisdom on Love, Sex, and Relationships by Leah Garchik with illustrations by Miguel Gallardo (Chronicle)

"That's two regular hookers and four midgets?" —gents planning bachelor party at a Mexican restaurant. "As an avid eavesdropper, I just love the snippets of conversation one hears on the bus and in restaurants, bars, and cafés. I just wish I'd been smart enough to write them all down and collect them into a book. This compilation of overheard conversation snippets speaks volumes about modern love. Plus, it's just plain funny.

Getting Off: A Woman's Guide To Masturbation by Jayme Waxman, foreword by Betty A. Dodson (Seal)

Yes, it's true: some of us still aren't comfortable doing it. And shocking but also true: some of us don't actually know how. But even if you are a seasoned solo artist, there's always room for improvement and new things to learn. Like, do you know where your AFE Zone is? Or how many nerve endings are in the clitoris? (If you do, send your answers to letters@joseyvogels.com for a chance to win a copy of this book—although I'm not sure whether you need it.)

The Threesome Handbook: A Practical Guide to Sleeping With Three by Vicki Vantock (Thunder's Mouth Press)

What with all the letters I get asking me how to arrange a threesome, I should order me a truckload of this book and send it out with every inquiry. Don't be fooled by the cheesy cover; this really is a practical guide

to sleeping with three that covers everything from finding a perfect third, "navigating freakouts," choreographing three bodies, and what to do if a three-way turns into love

Boobs: A Guide to Your Girls by Elisabeth Squires (Seal)

Like masturbation, you wouldn't think we'd need help with our boobs. But just because we got 'em doesn't mean we know everything about them. For example, do you know at what age women's breasts stop growing? (Send your answers to letters@joseyvogels.com for a chance to win a copy.) From buying the right bra to breast cancer to testing your "boob IQ," this is your quintessential guide to your "sweater kittens."

The Divorced Girls' Society Your Initiation Into the Club You Never Thought You'd Join by Vicki King, Jennifer O'Connell (Adams Media)

For all the advice on how to get into a relationship and how to make it work when you get there, there is little information out there on how to cope when the whole thing ends up in the crapper. From how to "go public" with a divorce to how to enjoy the holidays, get through Valentine's Day, and know when you're ready to get back on the horse and date again, this guide will see you through.

Singled Out: How Two Million Women Survived Without Men After the First World War by Virginia Nicholson (Penguin/Viking)

If you think single women today have it rough, consider yourself lucky you weren't British and solo after WWI when three-quarters of a million soldiers died and as many more were left incapacitated. Without enough men to go around, the "Surplus Women" were created. This is their fantastically well-researched and fascinating story. It'll give any modern-single gal hope.

The Official Nancy Drew Handbook:

Skills, Tips & Life Lessons From Everyone's Favorite Girl Detective by Penny Warner (Quirk)

Who needs psychobabble-filled self-help books when you can get all the relationship advice you need from Ms. Drew? Nancy knows how to tell a good guy from a bad guy and how to keep romance alive when you've been together forever. All this plus advice on how to tame a wild horse, what to do when your canoe leaks, and how to service your car when your brakes are cut. What

more does a girl need? Except maybe a Nancy Drew parody. *Confessions of a Teen Sleuth: A Parody* by Chelsea Cain (Bloomsbury) features all your favourite Nancy Drew characters in a tale of "real" teen-sleuth life, complete with secret romances and minor drinking problems.

And for the very naughty on your list, try giving them a couple of selections from director Candida Royalle, whose realistic, playful, and sexy approach is a breath of fresh air amongst the usual male-centric porn fare. *Under the Covers* takes a humorous look at women who live and work in the sex industry and reveals that what these women present

to the public isn't always what they are in private. *AfroDite Superstar* is the first ethnically diverse feature to come out under Femme Chocolat, a new division of Royalle's Femme Productions and this playful, sexy romp was just nominated for seven Adult Video News awards including Best Director for Venus Hottentot. Both titles available through com-easyouare.com.

And for those who like their smut in literary form, *Naughty or Nice: Christmas Erotica* (edited by Alison Taylor) and *Best Women's Erotic '08* (edited by Violet Blue) are two fabulous new collections of erotica from Cleis Press.

Have a naughty xxxmas!

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190. Announcements

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Dec 20 & 21 Daytime volunteers required for Christmas Bazaar events. Call Lana @ 414-7682.

Depot volunteers and drivers needed for Wean Food Basket Society (Inglewood, Clearview, Eastwood areas). Please call 413-4525.

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Heart Campaign: Kit assemblies, between Nov and February 2008 your pet will suit your schedule. days/evenings/for weekends. If you are available for three (3) or more hours per week, for three or more weeks, call the Heart & Stroke Foundation now and ask for Karen or Laura at 451-4545.

HELP to broadcast news nationally for the blind and print-restricted. Email: edmonton@voiceprintcanada.ca, 451-8331.

HOME CARE volunteers visit isolated neighbors, go for walks, help with errands. Call Capital Health Home Care 496-1300.

Homework Tutors: Project help is needed for children & young in care who require a stable support to ensure their academic skills. 1 hr/week, evenings or weekends. Staff support. Various locations. Ellen @ 432-1137, ext. 362.

Literacy Reading Tutors: needed to assist adults with disabilities learn basic reading and writing skills. 1 hr/week, evenings or weekends. Staff support. Various locations. Ellen @ 432-1137, ext. 362.

Make a difference in your community. ElderCare Edmonton is looking for volunteers to help with daily activities such as crafts, yard work and socializing. If you can spare a few hours each week and would like to have fun, call 434-7474 Ext.4

Mentors for Children & Youth: Be a friendly mentor to help children/youth living in group care. Giving advice needed to share time and interests. 2 hours/week, evenings or weekends. Various locations. Ellen @ 432-1137, ext. 362.

Seniors Recreation Activity: Program volunteers needed to participate in recreation activities (crafts, scrap booking, bingo, baking, etc.) with disabled female seniors living in new extended care facility in north east district. On-site support provided. Daytime or evening placements available. Call Ellen @ 432-1137, ext. 362.

Social companion for senior lady, client/athletic housekeeping, mature student/55+ person, valid driver's license required, resume. Please phone 453-8064.

Take advantage of this volunteer experience of a lifetime! Become a friend to a new Canadian artist and share a life changing experience. Contact Dulan at 474-8554

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Volunteer for Theatre Network and Get free tickets for any Performance! Call Elise @ 453-2440

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1600. Volunteers Needed

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! To assist new immigrants on a first time shopping trip for essentials. 2-3 hrs occasional, weekdays. Call Judy 424-3545, ext. 249.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! To help Somali children with homework. Begins in September. Ewalew, Northside location. Call Judy 424-3545, ext. 249.

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2005. Artist to Artist

ArtistHub Studio Gallery 2008 Call to Enter Group Shows. Deadline = December 17. Phone Tim 423-2966

Brooklyn's Lounge is looking for local bands to play Thursday nights. Earn money. For info call Jordan 994-8172 or email: jordan@brooklynslounge.com

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CRUISING THE COSMOS
with THE KID
DECEMBER 13 TO 19

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21)
Due to being born under the banner of the biggest planet, Jupiter, you're always trying to push the limits. Well, this time you oughta hold on a minute. If it ain't broke, don't fix it, or in the end all you'll do is risk it. Before the weekend, you'll be rollin' in clover so, like the song says, "Don't rock the boat baby, don't tip the boat over!"

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19)
You're in the black, got the wind at your back and with this turn of the tides, now you're on the attack. Such a joyous occasion certainly calls for celebration, but don't forget about the challenges you're still facing. This weekend, don't go and overdo it, or when Monday comes, are you ever gonna rue it!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 - Feb. 19)
If you could find a way to bottle the mix of human kindness that runs through your veins, your profit margins would be insane. You can't help it over but never underestimate the generosity that is you. People recognize the value of such, and if you were willing to lease it, you wouldn't want for too much!

PISCES (Feb. 19 - March 20)
How to make a buck and keep your heart happy in this hurry-bury, topsy-turvy world - isn't that the million-dollar question? Well, you may be on your way to making the million-dollar answer soon. The recent new moon brightens your slate clean, so your heart can now draw a map to your wildest dreams!

ARIES (March 21 - April 19)
Sometimes, when you have to fight for everything you get, it seems like it ain't worth it if it don't come with lotsa sweat. In fact, you can even start swingin' at foes that ain't there and tryin' to fight off help from all your friends who care. Aries, you don't have to fight no more 'cause you're at peace now, not at war!

TAURUS (April 20 - May 20)
You know, I just cause I takes you a long time to chew your cud, and come to a final answer. It don't always mean that you've got the right one. Like that now's a good time to have yourself some fun. Actually, it's a pretty bad idea. If you do, all that's good right for you'll walk out without so much as a 'see'!

GEMINI (May 21 - June 20)
Givin' in to impulse rather than makin' plans and gettin' set is kinda like playin' life as if you were gamblin' at roulette. It's all down to where the ball falls - there's really no safe bet. It's OK to succumb to temptation, as long as you know the aftermath you'll be facin'. If you think you can deal, go ahead and spin the wheel!

CANCER (June 21 - July 22)
Don't be worried when things get a little hard for you startin' this weekend. What else do you expect when you're water and it's rainy the winter? Just cause for a while things won't be so great, don't let yourself get eaten up with hate. Forget all about swimmin', go out and learn how to skate!

LEO (July 23 - Aug. 22)
This is one o' those times when business and pleasure won't mix, and it's no use tryin' to make it so by playin' the same old tricks. Right now, you've got too much at stake and you've done used up your lucky breaks. Give yourself one this time. It don't matter how much you apply force, things ain't gonna take that course!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 - Sept. 22)
If you're worried 'bout what awaits at the party gates, they say there's a way to make sure St. Peter don't hesitate. If you want a good seat up above, treat everyone equally with respect and love - and do lotsa good deeds for people in need. Nobody knows if it really works yet, but considerin' the options it's a pretty safe bet!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 - Oct. 22)
When luck opens a door as you pass by, it's in your best interest to walk inside. Especially when it's a high-class place like this - now could you resist? You better accept, whether or not you have appointments you think need to be kept. Although you may prefer to hedge your bets, this opportunity's as good as it gets!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 - Nov. 21)
You know Scorpio, it's OK to like yourself sometimes. In fact, right now, you should be proud of yourself. Business ain't bad, you've got someone who makes your heart glad, and you possess more creative energy than it seems you've ever had. Don't focus on what you lack, but the fact you deserve a pat on the back!

You can contact The Kid at crusinthecosmos@hotmail.com

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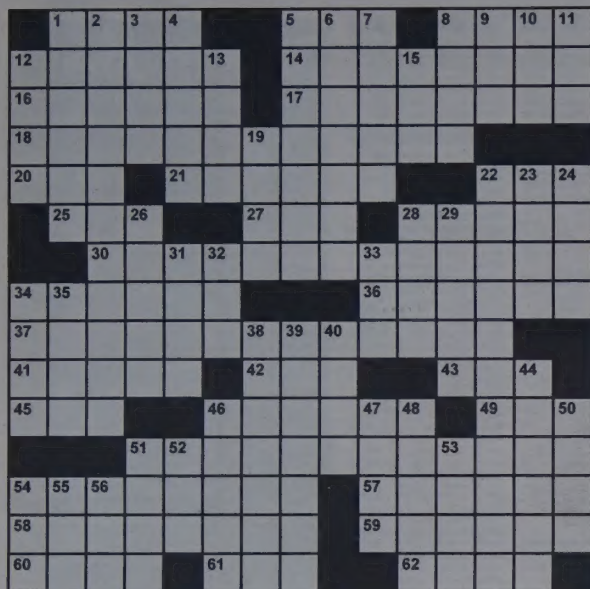
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SOLUTION TO LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE

ACROSS

- 1 Computer programs, for short
- 5 Pro-... (mixed tournaments)
- 8 Screen seductress
- 12 Garfield's feline girlfriend
- 14 "Hold on..."
- 16 Kids' song about an acorn "lying on the cold, cold ground"
- 17 Stomachache neutralizers
- 18 Midriff feature
- 20 Colony dweller
- 21 Tom who was followed by Craig Kilborn and Craig Ferguson
- 22 Newhart of "Newhart"
- 25 "Russell Simmons" ... "Strawberry Jam" ("In Living Color" ad spoof)
- 27 Whiggly swimmer
- 28 "Pick ... of Cotton" (Leadbelly song)
- 30 They're a must for burning
- 34 More unpredictable
- 36 Old-timey detergent form
- 37 Paper section
- 41 Three-piece suit components
- 42 It may have Braille markings, even on a drive-tru version
- 43 Rubdown site
- 45 TV cousin
- 46 Weak feeling
- 49 Abbr. also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease
- 51 Truckers' needs
- 54 Satellite dish curve shape
- 57 University of Cincinnati rival
- 58 Pride's sleeping place
- 59 Uses up
- 60 Kennedy couturier Cassini
- 61 Charlottesville clock setting; abbr.
- 62 Therefore

TWO BY TWO

DISSECTING FEARSOME A FOURSOME

JONESIN' CROSSWORD BY MATT JONES

DOWN

- 1 Antonio Banderas, in "Interview With the Vampire"
- 2 Itchy healer
- 3 Phnom ... Cambodia
- 4 Disses
- 5 Gave honors
- 6 His prison number inspired the 46664 campaign
- 7 It's plucked in Punjab
- 8 Wet/dry ... (multi-purpose cleaners)
- 9 "..." was saying...
- 10 Club ...
- 11 Some desktops
- 12 Sound system company dissolved in 2006
- 13 Windsor boys' school
- 15 File folder feature
- 19 Director David of 2006's "Hush Times"
- 22 Covering up a typing mistake, maybe
- 23 Ye ... Gift Shoppe
- 24 Harry S Truman's missus
- 26 Canadian with the 2007 hit "1234"
- 28 "It's ... sham!"
- 29 Sweat drops
- 31 Word before pit or pool
- 32 Macy Gray's "Gimme All Your Lovin' ... Will Kill You"
- 33 "Whatever"
- 34 606, to the Romans
- 35 "Can ... you in on a little secret?"
- 38 New ...
- 39 Repetitive

Tom the DANCING Bug

by RUBEN BOLLING

"THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT"



7:14 pm: A drunk shirtless guy tosses a hat onto his head—and the video is posted on YouTube.



7:19 pm: The video is a smash hit, drawing 50,000 hits in just over three minutes.



7:20 pm: Drunk-shirtless-hat-guy signs with MMA and then lands a two-picture deal with Fox.



7:21 pm: He buys an ocean-view Mediterranean-style mansion in Pacific Palisades.



7:22 pm: He marries actress Kristin Kreuk in a tasteful ceremony at a Santa Barbara ranch.



7:23 pm: The hit rate on his YouTube video starts to decline, and he loses the Fox deal.



7:24 pm: After replacing his entire management team, he gets an offer to host a new game show.



7:25 pm: But financial stresses cause Drunk-shirtless-hat-guy to get even drunker.



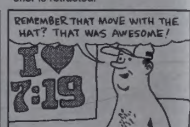
7:26 pm: After an unfortunate incident in Mexico, the game show offer is retracted.



7:27 pm: And then Drunk-shirtless-hat-guy's marriage to Kristin Kreuk disintegrates.



7:28 pm: His attempt to "return to his roots" by making another YouTube video is an utter failure.



7:29 pm: Drunk-shirtless-hat-guy's last taste of fame is a spot on VH1's "I Love 7:19 pm"

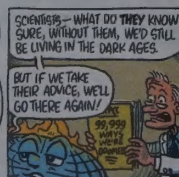
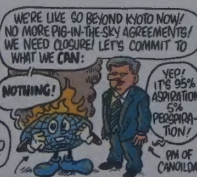
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INTERSECTIONS • PHOTOS OF OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS



Pittsburgh's Sidney Crosby in a face-off with Edmonton rookie Sam Gagner.
| PHOTO BY JIMMY JEONG

t5b

FIRST PERSON • EDMONTON STORIES • BY WIL KYNCL | 630 words

Where Everybody Knows Your Name

THE CURIOUS INTIMACY OF GLOWING STRANGERS

"Hem. Er. Oids." I pronounced the syllables carefully. I nodded as the elderly Asian woman repeated them.

"What does this mean, hem-er-oids?" she asked. Her wrinkled face was bent over the small sheet of notepaper that had been worked nearly translucent in her hands. I looked again at the pencil scrawls.

A doctor's name was at the top, but the rest was mostly Oriental characters. I saw a few English words in all-caps scattered through the text and had already tried (unsuccessfully) to define an ulcer for her. I was looking for the hidden camera, but I simply couldn't refuse an old lady who needed help at an Internet café. She seemed to be trying to send an official-looking letter home.

"They're itchy bumps," I explained slowly, "on the bum." I gestured at my ass.

"Ah, itchy!" she replied with sudden understanding, miming a scratching

motion at her own ample backside. I nodded quickly, feeling myself getting redder. Where was that damned camera?

I turned back to my computer and tried to focus on my game. The stunning brunette at the next station was grinning broadly. "Sorry about that," I smiled in return.

"No," she replied, "I thought you were really nice about it."

I felt another tap on my shoulder. I sighed inaudibly, paused the game, and turned back to the old lady. She smiled warmly, apologetically, and pointed at another word on the paper. "What is this word?" she asked. I felt myself go scarlet.

"Diarrhea," I murmured, searching again for the camera. I ignored a snort of laughter from the brunette. The woman repeated it carefully and asked, inevitably, what it meant.

"It's when-you go to the bathroom, and it all comes out... fast," I replied. "And runny." I kept my voice steady. She shook her head, a tiny frown on her lined mouth. I tried again.

"When you're sitting down, and it all comes out..." I began, but had no idea where to go from there. I mimed a splatting motion with my hands and yes, I blew a raspberry. I glanced at the brunette, who had tears streaming down her cheeks.

covered my Internet time.

This is my downtown café. I moved to Beaumont over a year ago, but I still make the 50-kilometre round trip to the café twice a week. Why? The coffee's good, but not that good.

As a writer, my words flow more easily here, but another place might do as well.

The licensed, eclectically decorated spot is just one of many struggling independent cafés in Edmonton. It's a block away from a Starbucks and two blocks from a Second Cup. But this place attracts a dedicated core of regulars and some of the most unpretentiously bizarre characters in the city.

It's all about the people, from the sultry owner and the fun, flirtatious staff to the odd clientele. But it's nothing like that "one big, dysfunctional family" cliché. Rather, it's like a cult, where interesting people fre-

"DIARRHEA," I MURMURED, SEARCHING AGAIN FOR THE CAMERA.

I IGNORED A **SNORT OF LAUGHTER** FROM THE BRUNETTE. THE WOMAN REPEATED IT CAREFULLY AND ASKED, INEVITABLY, WHAT IT MEANT.

I had forgotten to hit pause, and my men were decimated. A line of enemy troops were marching my flag back to their castle. I shot down the flagbearer and brought a world of pain on my enemies.

I was making headway when I

"Oh, yes! From the bum too!" the woman replied and blew a raspberry in return. Her radiant grin of comprehension faded to a puzzled smile as I cracked up, and she turned back to her computer. She left shortly afterwards. I found out later that she

quent a vibrant place and relate to each other—or not—exactly as they please. Which is why I keep returning. After all, someday I may have to keep my voice steady as I explain to an elderly Asian woman the definition of a "Dirty Sanchez."

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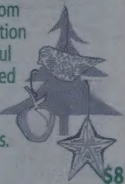
We've put a shiny bow around a seasonal majolica coffee collection.



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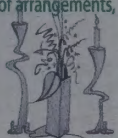


\$4



FLORAL PRIDE

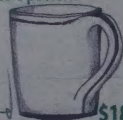
From our award-winning collection of arrangements, complete with bells on.



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GLITTERING GOLD

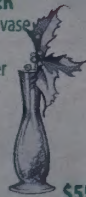
For the season...Italian majolica mug with gold rim in classic pattern.



\$18

SHINY SILVER

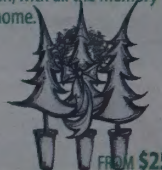
A sterling bud vase in silver. Or choose another bronze or pewter art piece.



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